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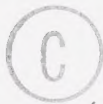
THE RELEVANCE OF TIME DIMENSIONS  
TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts

in the Division of Community Development

by



Ahmad Abd Azzahir

(Francis Ashley Cenac)

Edmonton, Alberta

Spring, 1982





THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and  
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research,  
for acceptance, a thesis entitled

THE RELEVANCE OF TIME DIMENSIONS

TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

submitted by: Ahmad Abd Azzahir

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## ABSTRACT

If we are to undertake and guide development intelligently in a world growing increasingly smaller, interrelated and interdependent, we must seek a better understanding of time dimensions, in both its culture and specific manifestations and in its ecological and environmental manifestations.

The study investigates the characteristics of time in the advanced industrial societies of the West, and the influence which that perception of time has had on the development patterns of the West, including the ecological and environmental challenges it has engendered. The study also investigates the time dimensions of traditional societies and the dilemma they face in choosing development paths which are compatible with their traditions and their culture.

In an emerging world system there is a serious need to reconsider 'development' in both its content and its direction. Community development is considered here as a development process which is compatible with the aims of another development in which human purposes, as opposed to technological purposes, are the transcendent goals of development.

The thesis holds that in the restructuring and directive process of change and development an understanding of time dimensions is a valuable conceptual tool for the implementation of such change and development.





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## INTRODUCTION

Development presupposes change and change presupposes time. When statements are made about change and development, usually some element of time is implied. To talk of change is to conceive of change taking place over time. Similarly, to talk of development implies a concern with a process of change moving from one existing state to another, over a certain span of time, at a specified rate, in a particular sequence (Lee, 1968).

In contemporary Western civilization many of the concepts used to describe its techno-industrial society and to differentiate it from others - "development", "progress", "modernization", "change" are premised on a certain perception of time, a perception in which "time ... is conceived as an autonomous, abstract dimension of lived experience" (Alverson, 1977). Time, as such, is unrelated to particular events, but merely becomes an aspect of all events. As Alverson (1977) remarks, "time, as Western men know it ... is unidimensional and it is linear".

This perception of time when contrasted with most non-Western cultures differs dramatically. Time is considered to be co-extensive with events, time is marked and individualized by the event; in short, the event defines time (Kagame, 1976). "Thus, the day is defined in terms of the union of daylight and darkness, the rising of women, goats leaving the krall, the milking, taking morning food, etc.



These are dimensions of time ... (which) are undefined in terms of any prior concept of pure time" (Alverson, 1977). Ortiz (1972), speaking of the Pueblo Indians of North America, also makes reference to the fact that these Indians have no abstract terms for time, and that time could not be understood by them when separated from the event or the forces and changes in nature which give it relevance and meaning. His concluding statement is worth quoting: "It is precisely when time becomes cut up into arbitrarily abstract units (weeks, hours, minutes, seconds) that tribal peoples lose all similarity in their time-reckoning customs with those of Western peoples. And these smaller units of time-reckoning are precisely the ones which concern Western minds the most".

The examples cited above indicate that the perception of time varies from culture to culture. As such, concepts of "progress", "change", "development" can be expected to differ in their meanings when transferred to another culture. The accepted views of these concepts in one culture does not necessarily mean either their acceptance or meaning in another. For this reason an awareness of differing cultural perceptions of time is but a way in which to create a common ground of understanding between peoples.

Such understanding is essential to the planning of change, whether it takes place in the economic, social or political arena. For as Nwosu (1976) pointed out while





planning processes involve exercises in imagination and theories and are mainly the concern of the decision-makers and their technical experts, plan implementation involves application of power and other resources and the involvement of the entire society in order to achieve desired objectives.

Time is of fundamental importance to the subject of development, and to Community Development particularly, because community development espouses a philosophy which approaches development differently - "it emphasizes popular participation and the direct involvement of a population in the process of development" (United Nations, 1971). Through Community Development people are encouraged, in cooperation with governmental authorities, to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of their lives, communities and society.

The subject of time addresses itself not only to the structures and functioning of societies, that is to the elements within a society which give it its continuity, but also to the ways in which they change. Time is both the frame of reference and the indicator of change, and people are both the products and perpetuators of their society and of time (Reszohazy, 1972). Time is the element that binds together perceptions of continuity and change. It should therefore be observed from the outset, as Doonbos (1974) pointed out, that demarcation of time



boundaries is an obvious and necessary undertaking in the analysis of change. The choice of time boundaries can then be of considerable consequence because they have a potential bearing on perceptions and the interpretation of data and in a sense may select and create processes from several alternatives.

The Western world today is undergoing a complete and total reassessment of some of the beliefs it has held paramount for the past two hundred years, and has relied upon to achieve its level of progress and development. That reassessment is brought about particularly by a growing awareness and recognition of ecological and resource limitations. Ophuls (1977) has succinctly encapsulated the problem when he pointed out that there are demonstrable limits to the demand humanity can place on its environment, and that although technology can help us manipulate limits to accord with human preferences, outright repeal of the limits is impossible. He also observed that manipulating the limits technologically has costs that we may not be able or willing to bear, particularly with reference to energy costs, and that time is of the essence if we wish to cope with limits effectively and humanely.

The present ecological situation challenges the very concepts of progress, development, change and modernization which previously have remained unquestioned by the West. Not only have they remained unquestioned, but they have also been used as the criteria for transforming the tra-





ditional societies into replicas of the so-called advanced and affluent nations.

The West perceives time as a linear, one-dimensional process, and has used it as a mechanical and utilitarian vehicle for the purpose of achieving primarily material growth. According to Lee (1968) the modern world created a new temporal dimension for development requires among other things a conception of time in terms of a long-range upward line. This, he said, was due to a belief in time as a helpful instrument which was available to man in his struggle for a better future. Of course, the situation has changed remarkably since Lee wrote. Today, what is becoming increasingly evident, is that present growth rate patterns and practices are self-destructive and un-sustainable (Hornby and McMullan, 1977).

The second report of the Club of Rome, Mankind at the Turning Point (1974) stressed that the present crises were not temporary, but reflected a trend inherent in the historical pattern of development, and that their solution could be developed only in a global context and on a long-term basis, or on a time dimension qualitatively different from that of the present. The report further explained that solutions could not be achieved by traditional means which were confined to an isolated aspect of the world system, but required the consideration of all aspects of evolution from individual values and attitudes to ecological and environmental conditions (Mesarovic and



Pestel, 1974).

In another part of the report (p. 15) the authors suggested a clue to the aberration inherent in the historical pattern of development in the West. They explained that this was due to the ever-widening gap between man and Nature and that man's physical isolation and mental estrangement from Nature was the logical consequence of the traditional concept of progress. Progress, as the authors saw it, in terms of world development, has led increasingly to a process of undifferentiated growth, growth based on an erroneous assumption that Nature's supporting system was inexhaustible in every respect.

Community Development is most relevant to the concerns of this thesis, because it is involved with collective projects, which implies creativity, strategy and change, at both the levels of the developed and developing societies. It deals with conditions of social instability and change and these are the conditions which traditionally developing countries have faced. Today these conditions have become planetary in dimension, affecting both developed and underdeveloped societies alike.

It is for this reason that time, the telescope through which the future is viewed, must be considered as relevant to both the developed and underdeveloped societies alike. In a world rapidly decreasing in size, and becoming more aware of its stature as a global village, the future must be considered as a common future. Dimensions of time





adequate to that shared future must therefore be given due consideration.

Community Development also espouses an approach to change called preventive social change; this means that Community Development is concerned with the continuities, the transformations in values, attitudes, etc., within societies. A world system of reasonable structural stability presupposes a need for a time concept which can deal with dimensions of time other than as is customary in terms of the developmental progress model of the West, and the exponential growth which it advocates. An obligatory role of Community Development expressed in its concern for preventive social change is the acquiring of positive support or recognizing significant elements in our conceptualizations of our reality, for required change (Laszlo, 1975).

An action or activity generated by an individual or group takes on meaning or significance by way of different fields of experience. Any action is identified or considered against a common background which orients all possible comparative investigations. The time dimensions of an emerging, appearing world system can provide such a background or foundation for the better assessment of our actions and policies (Behnke, 1974).

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to focus attention on the need for alternative developmental



models. The thesis seeks to point out an alternative approach to thinking and action concerning time - an integrative approach which bridges the gap between the Western societies and the traditional societies.

The study considers time as a crucial factor in understanding change and change processes. And, since development presupposes change of some kind, it follows that time, and particularly time dimensions, should be a significant factor in any study which considers change and development as its major concern.

The development model of the Western world can no longer be the prime example for the world as a whole. This statement is based on the ecological and environmental problems arising out of the development model of the West in which time is abstract, linear and efficient. The negative aspects of this model are today impacting not only on the Western societies themselves, but on all other societies as well, demonstrating a global impact which is comprehensive and total in its scope, which fact is becoming increasingly recognized. Allen (1980) is but one among an increasing number of recent writers to note that the components of the biosphere, including human communities, are interdependent, and the effects of actions taken locally may have regional and even global implications. The factors which may generate acid rain





may originate in the coal fields of the United States, but their impact is felt in the lakes and streams of Canada.

Very definitely at the ecological and environmental levels, the techno-industrial societies have had an impact on the total world system. Today it is foolhardy to consider any major economic project without considering the costs, in real terms, to the environment and to society, for these costs soon become manifest in such areas as pollution, societal health or some other unwanted side effect (Henderson, 1978). If a perception of time were present in which consideration was given to the maintenance of both societal and environmental health, the outcome would be appreciably different. Time which is tied to short-term economic gains is usually blind to the more long-term human, ecological and environmental interests of the situation.

Previously it was possible to talk of development without asking what was really meant by the term. Today we cannot do so as readily. The ecological and environmental demands of society have changed the concept of development drastically. We are now face to face with limits which the environment has placed upon us.

The thesis places great significance on the fact that with an increasing recognition and concern for the



environment and the ecology of the planet, growth and development no longer can be looked upon as exclusive determining criteria on which to base policy or actions. The message which the ecology of the planet and the environment is transmitting is one which says that the objectives of growth and development are not necessarily compatible with the aims of the ecological and environmental future of the planet.

Thus the ecological movement has created new and different situations which challenge the dominant development ideology of Western man. To meet these challenges Western man will have to develop a different sense of time. He very definitely will have to develop a sense of time that will include the non-pollution of environmental areas such as rivers and streams or the sea or air, because these natural areas support life and ultimately are responsible for the survival of man himself. The time sense of Western man, therefore, must consider how best to preserve and maintain these natural areas. It must consider the time dimensions in which the continuity of these natural areas are preserved as support systems of the planet.

Since our perceptions and conceptualizations of time are so crucial in guiding change and development, this study seeks first of all to generate an understanding of the field. It asks the question: how is time different



in the Western societies from the traditional societies? And what practical implications does that difference have for community development? The study will also suggest an integrative model of time which could guide development. The model will incorporate aspects of both the Western, as exemplified by its linear structuring of time, and the traditional view of time, with its more cyclic orientation. Finally a number of practical implications, particularly for community development, will be suggested, and the implications of the model as a guide to practitioners in the field.

The researcher believes that time is an indirect cause determining the linearity of development in the West. The thesis investigates the socio-cultural use of time to show how the dominant perceptions and conceptions of time developed in the West, and the corresponding influence it has had on Western society and Western development. The study equally investigates time within traditional societies to demonstrate its influence within these societies, and to show how it is much more adaptable to an ecological and environmental ethic of the future.

The researcher feels that in an emerging world system both developed and underdeveloped, traditional and non-traditional societies must confront a reality of development other than in the generally accepted terms





of being modern, and that such development must be guided by time-maintaining and time-sustaining qualities which will allow for a development in harmony with environmental and ecological norms.

It seems to me that Dumont (1975) was correct when he said that the interactions between civilizations were increasing dramatically, every day, and that this phenomenon should make obvious to almost anyone that a future state of the common civilization of the world could not be imagined as a mere extrapolation of the Western development model. Such a phenomenon, however, could be viewed, according to him, as the point of convergence of different evolutions resulting from the interactions between various traditions. And even though modern technology may be the most potent influence in those evolutions, other civilizations like India and China could not be without influence in the process.

Community Development is viewed as an example of a particular development model which has significant meaning for post-modern development in an emerging world system. The research looks at Community Development from the perspective of a particular development ideology which can incorporate time dimensions which are applicable to a New Age in an emerging world system.

Chapter 1 explores the significance of the changed



perception of time in the West. It investigates the causes which gave birth to this new perception, and the resulting effect on Western society and civilization. The study notes in particular the development of scientific thinking as the basis for Western progress and development.

The dominant perception of time emerging from Western society was due to science and the new interpretations and explanations it gave to natural phenomena. As Western man increasingly interpreted his reality in terms of science, we find that such interpretations did not remain exclusively confined to natural phenomena, but soon became a vehicle for interpreting the reality of the human condition as well. As nature became focussed within an evolutionary linearity of time, similarly we find that man became subject to the same narrow perception of an evolutionary meaning to his existence.

Science and its corresponding technological expertise was progress. Science indeed was the basis from which all progress flowed. Europe in its virulent encounter with science viewed the world through lenses which were not entirely unbiased or uncluttered. Europe's perceptions of itself as "progressive", and of other peoples and cultures as less so, underlies the distinction which is made between the traditional and the non-traditional or modern societies of the world.



Chapter 2 considers some of the assumptions made, particularly by the social sciences, of the meaning of time in traditional cultures. The researcher does not take the view of the social sciences as entirely justified, for the social sciences themselves have to be considered as projections of a specific regional situation, namely the Western world.

Chapter 2 further explores some typologies of time from the point of view of the traditional societies, and the significance of time in these societies to change.

The impact of Western science on an emerging global civilization inclusive of both traditional and non-traditional societies cannot be denied. The development model symbolized by the West offers an attraction for the majority of the world's people. The impact of science and technology on the world-views of traditional peoples has been, and continues to be significant. Yet it is the belief of the researcher that the time dimensions of traditional cultures have within themselves a greater awareness of ecological balance and harmony, and as such may contain or possess elements or values more adaptable to a future world ethic of development.

The first two chapters, therefore, focus attention on the important themes of development and the environment and show the relevant importance of time dimensions implicit





to both views.

Chapter 3 deals with 'development', as both concept and ideology, and places in perspective the time dimensions which guide its essential process. The chapter considers development as a product of the linear perception of time which emerged in the West and also examines development and its ideological goals of modernization.

Chapter 4 specifically addresses the question of community development as a study offering an alternative to the more accepted concepts of development. The chapter deals with ideas which tend to encapsulate the search for alternatives. In the emerging language of this field one speaks of 'economies of scale', 'intermediate technologies', 'small is beautiful', etc., as key phrases used to grapple with an emerging and sensed need for an alternative development model. These ideas engender an undercurrent of relational meaning to community development for they seek to bring development within the purview of human purpose as opposed to technological purpose and technological ends typical of the modernistic societies.

The last and concluding chapter, Chapter 5, examines the theoretical and practical implications of the thesis. It suggests a model which attempts an interpretation of time in which developmental and ecological concerns are



not mutually exclusive of each other. And it demonstrates through practical examples the need for a new perception of time, and the value of time dimensions in this new perception.



## CHAPTER 1 - TIME IN THE WESTERN WORLD

### Understanding Time

'Time' as a subject has held a fascination for man since the dawn of civilization. This interest in time goes on unabated today because whether we like it or not, time affects our lives, from the moment we are born to the moment we die. As individuals we perceive time and invest it with peculiar qualities. The time of our youth is different from the time of our adulthood. At the same time we also view time objectively; we plan to do things in a specific length of time - "in six months I will have enough money to buy this car". There are times of sadness and times of happiness and joy. We celebrate at specific periods of the year - Christmas, Easter. These are times of celebration. We work five days of the week and rest on the other two.

All of these peculiar 'times' we have experienced personally, and yet if we were to ask "what is time?" the possibility exists that you would reply as St. Augustine did many centuries ago: "If nobody asks me, I know; but if I were desirous to explain it to one that should ask me, plainly I know not".

Time is a product of our minds. It has no reality except that which we collectively choose to give to it. The elementary experience of duration is universal whether we distinguish one event from another, like the birth of





of a child or the death of an aged elder, or whether through our own observations we note the changes taking place in nature - the alternations of day and night, the succession of the seasons, etc. Time emerges out of our experience of duration. Time as Peter Hughes points out is a creation of man (1969).

The nature of time, the factors governing the perception of time, and the impact upon man of time awareness have long been the concern of philosophers. Time has been, and still continues to be, of interest to many disciplines. Those interested in cross-cultural studies, comparative religion, anthropology, have striven to prove that there are different ways of looking at time. Physicists have been concerned with the nature of time's flow; more recently psychologists and psychiatrists have investigated and examined the perception of time as it relates to motivation and achievement, while others have drawn parallels between the distortion of time and the nature of mental illness (Yaker, 1972).

As individuals, we each give to time its own particular significance. To a scientist, time is one thing, to a layman it is another; to an historian, time is a study of the past. As Doob (1971) explained, each science has various ways of measuring time; a biologist, if taken as an example, determines whether he will employ the age of the organism, life expectancy, reaction time, chronaxie, or periodicity as a temporal frame of reference by noting which standard is most useful for the problem being investigated.



Each individual translates time according to his/her particular needs and satisfactions; each individual shapes time to suit his/her own particular purposes. In the present Western world, we cannot do without time. Time is essential to the fulfillment of our ambitions. James McKay (1959) has noted the importance which time plays in the life of the individual engaged in making a living in today's society. He sees time as an important element which, if used conscientiously, could assist the individual in self-improvement, in achieving and holding positions of leadership in a world where innovation is constant. To do so though, requires that the individual continuously add to his or her resources of knowledge and skills. Such an individual cannot afford to be a spendthrift of time. He must learn to guard it with resolution, to handle it with precision, and to invest it with acumen.

Time operates at both an inner subjective level and an outer observable level. Man, as such, lives both in chronological time and in psychological time, as exemplified by the fairly mundane process of watching a dog walk across the street. We are aware of the duration of the dog's activity, but though we are less conscious of it, there is still the process of the duration of our watching, which is a mental process qualitatively different from observing the dog's movement from point A to point B (Barden, 1973).

There is a distinction to be made between time as



yesterday, by the calendar, and time as yesterday, by memory. Man moves and operates in both the chronological and the psychological dimensions of time. They are both avenues, processes of the mind, through which man seeks to bring order to events in his life.

This need for order has conditioned man to view time as a process closely associated to a "cause-effect" relationship. This is particularly true of the Western world where time is viewed as the link between cause and effect in both a physical and a psychological sense. Time is considered as the interval between cause and effect, though it can be seriously questioned whether such interval really is time. In his book The Psychology of Time Fraisse (1963) devoted a whole chapter to "The Notion of Time" but finally concluded that our representations of time may be more or less abstract according to the contents to which they refer. But abstractions, as we know, are open to speculation.

The following story illustrates this point very well. It is taken from Robert Ornstein's book The Psychology of Consciousness (1972) and is used to introduce the chapter titled "The Temporal Dimensions of Consciousness".

"What is fate?" Nasruddin was asked by a scholar.  
"An endless succession of intertwined events, each influencing the other".

"That is hardly a satisfactory answer. I believe in cause and effect".

"Very well" said the Mulla. "Look at that". He pointed to a procession passing in the street.



"That man is being taken to be hanged. Is that because someone gave him a silver piece and enabled him to buy a knife with which he committed the murder; or because someone saw him do it, or because nobody stopped him?"

The story demonstrates the difficulty in positing a simple cause-effect rationality to determine human behaviour and brings into question that interval of time which we use to separate the cause from the effect. We often fail to see that today is the effect of yesterday and the cause of tomorrow. We fail to grasp time as a movement, a continuous flowing which, as Nasruddin stated in the story cited above, is comprised of an endless succession of intertwined events, each influencing the other.

If we were to look again at the passage quoted above by McKay (1959) we could see that time is used by us as a means to attain psychological ends; we use time as a means to achievement, tangible or psychological; and we become aware of time when there is an impediment to this achievement.

According to McKay (1959), to hold a position of leadership requires hard work. One must acquire knowledge and skills to give one that leadership edge to overcome the competition, and therefore time must be considered as a valuable resource to be "guarded" and "invested" with acumen. In this way we separate time inwardly in order to become, in order to achieve. I am this, and I shall become that. To become that I need time - chronological





time used for psychological purposes. Thus cause-effect is considered to be a time process, both physically and psychologically.

According to Wallis (1968) most people consider time as an entity, a thing which has been given to them, and which they consider to be almost in the nature of a possession. They act as if time were completely acquired and always expendable. In his analysis Wallis used the comparison between time and the breathing of air to make his point. As the process of breathing, for the most part, remains an unthinking natural process which we accept without question, so does time operate on a comparable level. As we become conscious of air only through the realization that there is an insufficiency of it, so similarly do we become conscious of time and its existence through realization of the lack of a supply.

Just as we are basically unaware, when we breathe, of the complex physical, chemical and physiological mechanisms through which our bodies interact with the air, so similarly we have no original consciousness of interior time. As we are aware of air as being outside ourselves, air which we can bring under our scrutiny and analysis and determine its elements as a composite of oxygen and hydrogen, in the same way Wallis (1968) notes man becomes aware of a certain exterior duration to which he adjusts his daily life. It seems, therefore, that time has two aspects. There is time as the observable aspect of an outer world, a time



that is perceived through sensation or stimuli, a time which Doob (1971) acknowledged exists in every society. Man is aware of the passing of time if only by observing the length of his shadow upon the ground or the phases of the moon. To this aspect of time the word chronology is attached, a word derived from the Greek god of time - Chronos (Leach, 1961, Yaker, 1972).

It has also been noted that time does not partake of the outer physical senses only, but also of the psychological. There is time which is conceptual, time which generates different modes of thought. There is time as the past, the present or the future. These two aspects of time have posed a dilemma to our apprehension of time. Riser (1940) has remarked on this difficulty to bring together the conceptual world of thought and the perceptual world of growth and motion.

Moore (1963) and Buce (1979) also noted the difficulty in finding ideas which have truly captured these two aspects of man's experiencing of time. Moore stated that the focus on time as a central feature of order and sequence was so minimally developed that no one has as yet invented a name for the science of the temporal dimensions of social life. The term "chronology" does not adequately represent this science of the temporal since it more aptly applies to the ordering and dating of past events, excluding in the process the rhythms and cycles, the strains in time allocations and the strategies of planning that



mark the phenomena of time in human experience.

Time as concepts or ideas depends on memory to give it reality, and memory through history, philosophy and religion gives to time an order and sequence it would otherwise lack. It is through psychological time, as Hughes (1969) observed that we are able to overcome brute duration and give to time human meaning and value. The seven-day week, for example, which we follow so assiduously, as Moore (1963) pointed out, is nothing more than a cultural convention.

Guenon (1972) expressed similar sentiments about time. Time, he said, possessed a quality beyond the physical. He recognized time as one of the conditions which defined corporal existence, but saw in that existence also a condition beyond the merely physical. Time, as he implied, was not merely quantity, but also essence, quality.

Time and space are usually linked together. In this study the concept time-space is not given any serious consideration. However, the writer wishes, briefly, to consider the time-space relationship at this point.

Guenon (1972) has paid some attention to the subject, and has observed that the measurement of time and the measurement of space are not necessarily linked. According to him, space can be measured directly, but time can be measured only by relating back in some way to space. In the process, what is measured is never really duration





but space covered only in a certain length of time. It is the law, which is a given, that establishes the relationship between time and space. In the course of movement, when such a law is known, and the amount of space covered is also known, it is possible to deduce therefrom the amount of time occupied in covering it. But, regardless of the artifices employed, there is actually no other way than this whereby temporal magnitudes can be determined.

Behnke (1974) observed that the Western tradition has made some common assumptions about the nature of time and space. Time and space are considered things whose nature or essential characteristics can be isolated and enumerated in the same way as the properties of an object are defined. Time and space, as Behnke (1974) has stressed, are among the conditions which exist for the possible appearance of any subjects, objects, things or characteristics. In her view we should refrain from limiting space and time. We should move away from the Western tradition which considers space as infinite and extended and time as linear and unidirectional. Time and space exist as dimensional horizons.

Behnke further makes an important observation in recognizing that it is not relevant in all periods or in all cultures to take for granted a system of coordinates whereby bodies may be located in three-dimensional space. Space is not necessarily only visual and spatial, but there can exist space which is also audial or tactile. One may



extend the analogy further and say that the coordinates of specific cultural manifestations may view time quite differently from the West.

The study therefore does not address itself to the time-space phenomenon of the physicist, though it expresses a general interest for 'time' and 'space' as particular conceptual dimensions of modern man's lived reality. This point can be illustrated by examining the implications of McLuhan's (1964) theories for understanding time and space as it relates to modern communications technology. Communications today involve the instantaneous transmission of information via radio and television. McLuhan has always referred to these modes of communication in spatial terms. In his book Understanding Media he referred to them as the extensions of man. McLuhan saw the modern media as a vehicle which dissolved duration into distance and he ascribed to this occurrence the great leap forward of Western culture. According to McLuhan (1964) the great cultural changes which occurred in the West did so only when the West found it possible to fix time as something that happened between two points.

However, it must be recognized that the emphasis on the visual and the spatial nature of time in the Western tradition, time, conceived as extended in space and temporality viewed as linear, is not only of recent origin but remains a cultural phenomenon of Western man.

It is this linearity of time with which this writer



wishes to deal; first to explain and understand its origin and meaning and; second, to show how the perception of time as linear performed an important role in the development and modernization of the West; third, to determine the future of that perception, since development and modernization have themselves led to the encounter and confrontation with Nature.

The fact that this confrontation exists today shows that the time dimensions which the linear view espouses are not adequate to meet the time dimensions which Nature proposes. Time dimensions are the perceptual channels through which attempts are made to focus attention on the future.

The linear perception of time in the West has determined the ideas of progress, growth and development in our culture. These ideas have taken on connotations of continual increase, where bigger is better and more is never enough. Put simply, the non-recognition by Western man of the concept of limits seems to be a basic flaw in how he apprehends and perceives his reality, whereas an understanding of units has been the *modus operandi* of almost all previous civilizations and traditional societies generally.

Time is important, and Ortiz (1972) recognized that importance when he observed that it was one of the categories in man's cultural system which provides him with



his primary level of orientation to reality.

### Sociocultural Time

The question of time has been addressed so far from the point of view of the chronological and the psychological aspects of time. The author has tried to show how these two aspects of time are similar and at the same time different. These two aspects of time awareness are inseparably intertwined, and the study is intricately involved with both aspects. However, the focus of the study must be broadened to include not only the psychological, that is, the personal and individual level of perceiving time, but also the social and cultural. The study is concerned with how socio-cultural groups perceive time, and in particular how the global groupings which are generally referred to as "modern" societies and "traditional" societies perceive time. In turn, the study considers how these two views, the modern and the traditional, have influenced their behaviour for change.

Krober (1963) considered culture as characterizing man more specifically than his social manifestations. He saw culture as being better able to define the human condition than the social. He pointed out that culture was the distinguishing factor between man and other animal species, and defined it on the basis that it was a particularly human creation. Culture includes speech, knowledge, beliefs, customs, acts and technologies, ideals and rules.





Culture then consists of the activities that are learned, and these activities are transmitted socially and acquired by man as a member of societies.

When the word "culture" is used, we associate with it the heritage possessed by the individual or collectivity. It is something which is transmitted from the past, passed on from generation to generation, and has established itself as "tradition". Tradition is the process through which culture maintains its continuity. As such, culture can truly be said to be a precipitate of a collectivity's history. The culture of today is largely received from yesterday.

The term sociocultural is used here to qualify the time experienced by these groupings. The term applies to the times of "modern" societies and "traditional"societies. This research attempts to study culture in terms of the totalities it represents, though recognizing at the same time that these totalities are dependent on the actions and behaviours of men in social groups. Mayer (1972) expressed the sentiments of the researcher in adopting this approach when he stressed that the student of culture who wished to study actual developments must do so not with an exclusively scientific approach but with a sense for narrative and aesthetic empathy, a sense for values and style. According to Mayer (1972) the complex nature of culture could not be adequately represented by collecting



or manufacturing aggregate data. The emphasis on culture is therefore part of a turn away from the pseudo-scientific pretensions of the behavioural and quantitative approaches. Focusing on culture means participating in the post-behavioural revolution.

It is impossible to separate the experiencing of time at the individual level from the collective experiencing of time, for embedded in the personal sense of time experienced by the individual is a societal dimension of time which allows a collectivity to order and organize temporal activities.

As the individual participates in that collective ordering there emerges an awareness of temporality beyond the mere span of the personal life of the individual. According to Lynch (1972) memories, expectations, and present consciousness are not just personal possessions. They are temporal organizations through which the sense of self is socially supported. A direct and simple case is that of the small group that has actually experienced certain events together and, by constant communication and reinforcement, has created a group past and a group future, selecting, explaining, retaining and modifying their experiences. There are also larger and more enduring groups whose common pasts are symbolic rather than experienced. The ancient Chinese are reputed to have had an official tribunal whose duty it was to decide what events were worth remembering and therefore worthy to be



passed down to future generations.

Lynch (1972) recognized that the multiple streams of collective memories must be brought into some common framework to allow coordinated social action, and from this common framework arose common ways of marketing and structuring time, common histories and myths, common rituals.

Doob (1971) noted that every society has rules suggesting their dependency on time, which though usually not defined explicitly were employed implicitly in many different ways. Rezsohazy (1972) has also suggested that each society, with its corresponding culture, has worked out a certain conception of time which is accepted as natural by the majority of its members and used as a criterion for regulating their activities. Each society therefore has patterns of behaviour adapted to the concept of time which it inculcates in its members through the process of socialization.

Sorokin (1964), one of the more prominent writers in the field of the sociology of time, considered socio-cultural time as having seven characteristics, and those characteristics as making such time different from other time in the following way:

- (1) That it conceives and measures sociocultural phenomena - their duration, synchronicity, sequence, change - in terms of other sociocultural phenomena taken for the point of reference.
- (2) That the fundamental trait of sociocultural time is that it does not flow evenly in the same group and in different societies.



- (3) That the moments of sociocultural time are uneven
- (4) That sociocultural time is not infinitely divisible.
- (5) That sociocultural time is qualitative through and through.
- (6) That sociocultural time is not an empty flow but an efficient time which by its passage turns out to be an important creative, modifying and transforming agency in a great many sociocultural processes.

Among the many authors cited above, there is one factor which meets with a general consensus, and this is the recognition that time has a quality which is beyond quantity. Sorokin (1964) has also given recognition to this qualitative dimension of time in his analysis of sociocultural time. According to him, if sociocultural were to be replaced by a purely quantitative time, time would become devitalized and lose its reality.

Sorokin (1964) admits that modern society experiences time both quantitatively and socioculturally. This statement is true of all societies. However, in the discussion of "modern" societies as opposed to "traditional" societies, we are of course dealing with the extent to which a society uses the "quantity" or the "quality" dimension of time and how such use influences and determines that society's collective behaviour. Let us here consider Western or modern societies.





## Western Man and Time

The reasons which are given for the emergence of Western civilization are many and varied, and a study which seeks to assess all the information relevant to this topic could encompass many volumes. However, there is pertinent information relevant to the subject of this thesis which can contribute significantly to an understanding of the peculiar nature of time in Western society.

Earlier it was mentioned that Mesarovic and Pestel (1974) said that the concept of progress emerged as a result of a separation between man and nature. They pointed out that the ever-widening gap between man and Nature - his physical isolation and his mental estrangement from Nature - was the logical consequence of the traditional concept of progress. It is the contention of the writer that without the conceptualization of time as linear and one-dimensional the concept of progress itself would have little meaning. It is therefore of paramount interest that we investigate how time became linear and one-dimensional. We must ask the question: what are the unique features influencing and infusing the concept of time which finally emerged in the West as a dominant feature of its culture? Because, significantly, it is through this unique



apprehension of time that modern societies through coordinated social action have been able to sustain and maintaing themselves, and become developed.

Yet Mesarovic and Pestel are not alone in referring to this aberration, this break between man and Nature. In the book The Discovery of Time, Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) have referred to the picture of the natural world that we have, as one which is of relatively recent origin. Such a picture was developed only during the past century and a half by speculations made about the natural world. Those discoveries created a new picture of the world. Man learned how the natural world must have looked in earlier epochs, and demonstrated how it changed and developed over vast periods of time. The authors have said of such an occurrence that "in the whole history of thought no transformation in men's attitude to Nature ... has been more profound than the change in perspective brought about by the discovery of the past".

Through the discoveries made by science Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) noted the past became historical. During the nineteenth century the History of Nature was rewritten more drastically than ever before or since, and the intellectual choices which men of the time faced had unavoidable repercussions on their wider attitudes and beliefs. The historical past relied on



he evidence of scientific observation and inquiry for its authority. But as Eisley (1970) noted the scientific process was in itself a new and radically different approach from all previous attempts at an interpretation of Nature.

Grant (1969) has observed that the modern concentration of man as historical has led to a whole way of conceiving the temporal dimensions of time in terms of man's collective development through the ages, and that the modern accounts of knowledge have focussed on the genesis of a thing in order to know it. Modern culture, in general, according to Laroui (1976), has accepted historical time as its supreme value as opposed to other conceptions of time such as cosmic, mythical, physical or psychological. Within this acceptance of the historical, Laroui (1976) noted there was an implicit acceptance of a directional flow of time. The historical process sought to understand man within a temporal perspective, and through that temporal perspective man's actions became the criteria for effectively judging and assessing his own collective behaviour.

Through science, through the evidence which science provided about the events of the past, the modern historical consciousness emerged. Eiseley (1970) discussed the changes which took place in man's vision of



Nature, and observed that the ideas of development, change, or what was called 'historicity' appeared in several distinct fields with surprising rapidity. Through the sciences Nature acquired a past, an historical past, and man, his physical body included, also participated in an evolutionary past which was radically different from the beliefs held prior to that time of man's origin and Nature's origin. The time dimensions which emerged were based entirely on the evidence of scientific observation.

The first branch of natural science to become genuinely historical, as Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) noted, was geology. When once the fact of geological change had been admitted, questions about the temporal sequence of these changes became inescapable. Questions like: what agencies were responsible, were they the same as those now acting, how long they had taken to produce their visible effects, were asked. In their turn, these historical questions led to further research and to more discoveries, which rebounded once again on inherited ideas and assumptions. So observation and theory snowballed, and a brand-new temporal framework was gradually forced on men.

In the evidence which geology produced, like the fossil organisms discovered through the layers of rock, it was possible to reconstruct the temporal succession





of organic forms from the sequence of such fossils in the earth's crust. It was also possible to recognize the progressive increase in complexity of organisms through geological time. It was through this body of knowledge of geological research that science attempted its first groping entrance into the vast domain of time.

Another science - paleontology - developed on the basis of the discoveries made through geology. It specifically addressed itself to the study of prehistoric forms of life. Here again the fossil remains of extinct organisms were pieced together, compared and set in chronological order. In the long run the paleontological evidence played an essential part in establishing the theory of evolution. The fundamental facts revealed by paleontology showed that the older the rocks the simpler forms of life they contained and that the traces of higher animals were confined to the geological strata of comparatively recent date.

Paleontology gave support to the doctrine of organic 'progression'. The temporal succession of organic forms, gradually increasing in complexity from one geological epoch to the next, was clear evidence that the later animals were related to the earlier by actual descent. And as Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) have observed, the distribution of species in space and time posed the central historical question of the origin of species.



But it was left to Darwin (1859), with his publication of the Origin of Species, to explain how, within the limits of geological time, the minute variations known to occur between the individuals of different species could have become dominant, and accumulate to such an extent to have repeatedly given rise to new and distinct species. Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) therefore considered Darwin's research as an important breakthrough which explained the succession of organic types both in space and time - geographical distribution and geological relationship - and the conclusion that existing species represented the present generations of an historical family tree.

But, besides establishing the historical origin of species in Nature, Darwin's work was also linked to another important idea - that of natural selection. Animal or plant populations, originating from the same parent group but exposed to different physical environments (climate, soil, etc.) and different biological environments (food supply, predators, competitors) could end up with characteristics quite different from each other, while at the same time ensuring 'the survival of the fittest'. The theory of descent, with modification through variation and natural selection, led to a consistent and convincing interpretation of the facts of geographical distribution and paleontology. From now on, as Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) observed, men would



interpret the worlds of geology, paleontology and zoology in a new historical way.

This new interpretation of the history of Nature soon acquired a new element, a new superimposed progressive element. This element, in association with the ideas surrounding the gradual development of organic species, made the history of Nature authentically developmental. Science and History, the two most powerful intellectual currents in the nineteenth century, were united to produce a modern conception of time.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century man still religiously held to the opinion that the variety of natural species (as attributed to by the botany and zoology of the day) was due to supernatural and instantaneous creation.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed the almost total disappearance of this tradition. Barfield (1965) has noted that in the record of the rocks and the panorama of organic nature, history and science together gradually divined the vestiges of a different, a 'natural' kind of creation, one that was the reverse of instantaneous. Nature herself came to be seen as a process in time and the individual phenomena at any moment, instead of being fixed and parallel shapes repeated and repeated since creation's day, were cross-sections of their own development and metamorphosis. Phenomena could be truly grasped only by looking before



and after.

The historical world-view of the nineteenth century affected men of all intellectual temperaments. It also created an intellectual crisis as men attempted to understand the modern scientific conception of Nature (which excluded any idea of final purpose) but instead related that conception of final purpose to human purposiveness. It was in such an intellectual environment that the modern conception of history first made its appearance. A conception which posited dimensions of time in which Nature and man 'developed'. A conception which (Grant (1969) said was perceiving the world as an historical process, perceiving time as history and man as an historical being.

Roszak (1973) has captured the essential quality of this change and its significance within the Western world-view in his analysis of today's modern culture. He has stated that the mindscape to which our culture has been shaping itself over the past three centuries - and with ever more decisive urgency - since the advent of industrialization - has been through the creation of modern science. Science, in its turn he argues, has reared itself on certain continuities of consciousness it inherits from the Judaeo-Christian tradition of the West. What is important to Roszak is the all-pervasiveness of science in every aspect of modern man's life.





Modern man perceives his world through a scientific lense. The feel of the world around him, the sense of reality, the taste that spontaneously discriminates between knowledge and fantasy is determined by science. In all these respects science has become the dominant force designing the psychological and metaphysical basis of our politics.

Fundamental to the perception of time in Western society is a linearity of view which pervades all aspects of the social system. This linear view of time developed out of the interpretations of man and Nature put forward by the sciences of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This view of man and Nature differed from previous conceptions in which Nature (inclusive of man) was portrayed essentially as a product of divine creation and considered as possessing certain sacred qualities. The sciences, as they evolved created a world-view of man and Nature which was devoid of any recognition of a 'sacred' in Nature.

The method of the sciences based on observation and inquiry implicitly shifted the responsibility for an interpretation of Nature from the realm of the religious to that of the secular sciences. Whereas in the past the conception of the "sacred" in Nature established specific responsibilities of man towards Nature and tended to limit the actions of man in his relationship towards



Nature. Now, as the sciences created a new modern world-view these limits were discarded. Nasr (1968) has noted that the sciences of nature themselves, which could be considered in one sense the fruit and, in another, the cause of the present crisis of man's encounter with Nature, have themselves through a gradual process become secularized. And this secularized knowledge of Nature divorced from the vision of God in Nature has become accepted as the sole legitimate form of science. Science, as Grant (1969) observed, became the authority which sanctioned progress, and the progress of the sciences became in turn the hallmark of the modern era.

Previously the majority of men, as Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) have mentioned, found the final justification of their ethical and religious conceptions in a cosmic history embracing both Nature and man. This history has a common element which united the Myth of Osiris, aboriginal stories of the dream-time, the Hebrew Covenant and the Christian Gospel with a common cosmic purpose.

Now the new theory called into question both the uniqueness of man and the traditional view of cosmic history. Darwin's explanation of the origin of species, according to Toulmin and Goodfield (1965), as an historical theory inevitably challenged the historical claims of all alternative religious accounts of man. The ideas of historical development, and of progress, were two of the



most significant features of thought which emerged from the sciences of the nineteenth century.

Attention, however, must also be focussed on the movement of perception away from the sacred to the secular and the new role of status of man within that new world-view. The thinkers who accepted the new account of Nature attributed to man a new sense of freedom. Man was seen not only as part of evolution, but as its spearhead, with the capacity to direct the very process from which he came forth. Man was viewed as emerging out of an accidental evolution to assume a position as creator or the exclusive change agent on the planet.

The human will, as Grant (1969) has observed, was summoned to change the very structure of what is, to bring about something novel, to conquer an indifferent nature and make it good or better. Human willing became the assertion of the power of the self over something other than the self; human willing took seriously the process of actualizing purposes.

Its intent was to master the world through doing and make it what man wanted it to be. Human willing was no longer one type of agent in a total process of natural agents, all of which were directed towards the realization of good purposes. Human wills were seen as standing above the other beings of nature, with the capability to make those other beings serve the purposes of human



freedom.

Since apparently all else in Nature, other than man, appeared to be indifferent to good, man assumed the mantle, through doing, of actualizing moral good in an indifferent world. Man through his freedom became the sole arbiter of what is to be done in Nature, or upon Nature. It must, however, be kept in mind that Nature was no longer sacred, Nature no longer carried within its bosom an unfathomable beingness, and unknowable consciousness. Man had no referrent for his actions but himself and history; there was no sacred or divine order by which to measure man's actions. Time, therefore, became a developing history of meaning which man himself created. Jose Arguelles (1975) has profoundly and insightfully commented on this changed perception of man's view of time noting, when we speak of history, we are really speaking of a way of rationalizing time. With this new perception of time the notion of the good was equated to material progress and progress was considered to be paramount, even above and at the expense of Nature.

### The Technology of Time

An attempt has been made so far to present and define the causes behind the intellectual transformation which took place in the conception of time of Western man, and





also the new time dimensions which emerged and became dominant over the past two hundred years in the Western world. However, there is another stream, another ingredient which must be included in this analysis to fully have completed an understanding of the nature of time in Western society. The measurement and recording of the passage of time, a process which today commands a sophisticated technology also played a significant part in changing Western man's view of time. As Ornstein (1972) stated, Western scientists today define the second as 9,192,631,700 cycles of the frequency associated with the transition between two energy levels of the isotope cesium 133. This suggests how infinitesimally time is measured, and also with what incredible precision it is measured.

Both Mumford (1963) and White (1969) have pointed out that the clock was a significantly important development in the West. White (1969) observed that from very simple beginnings the West rapidly expanded its skills in the development of power machinery, labor-saving devices and automation. But most importantly of all was that most monumental achievement in the history of automation - the weight driven mechanical clock which appeared in Europe in the early fourteenth century.

Mumford (1963) added that the regular measurement of



time by the clock was the first application of quantitative methods of thought to the study of Nature. The clock measured time not as a sequence of experiences, but as a collection of seconds, minutes and hours. The very nature of this process tended to dissociate time from human events and helped to create the belief in an independent world of mathematically measurable sequences or the special world of the sciences.

Clocks in fourteenth century Europe, according to Mumford (1963), were put on bell towers, and the regular striking of the bells served as a means of bringing into the lives of the urban dweller a new regularity. This had definite societal implications. The clock now gave to human enterprise the regular collective beat and rhythm of the machine, for the clock not only served as a means of keeping track of the hours, but also, and importantly, of synchronizing the actions of men.

But the clock, to Mumford, was more than just an instrument which measured time. He saw in it the representation of the collective psychological gestalt of technique. Indeed, Mumford (1963) called it the key-machine of the modern industrial age. It was the symbol of Western man, the symbol which more than any other was to dominate every aspect of modern existence. It served as the model for the mechanization and regimentation which was to occur in Europe and America with the coming



of industrialization in the nineteenth century. As a symbol of the age it also embodied the key principles of independent motion and regularity. Through the clock Western man came to perceive time in exclusively quantitative terms.

Thus, as Mumford (1963) stated, in every phase of industrial development the clock was both the outstanding fact and the typical symbol of the machine. And when, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the cheap standardized watch was produced in Europe and America, time-keeping became popularized. This popularization, as he mentioned, was essential to a well-articulated system of transportation and production.

Ben Franklin, in the famous adage attributed to him, had said some time earlier that 'time is money'. The cheap standardized watch now made time-keeping, time-accounting and time-rationing societal norms which were not unlike the attitude which people had to money. For when one thinks of time, not as a sequence of experiences, but as a collection of seconds, minutes, hours, the habits of adding and saving time begin to play, increasingly, a more important role in daily life. 'Time is money' implied not only time-saving but also money-making. Through time-saving Western man was rewarded with a corresponding accumulation of money



or capital.

The result of this attitude, as Arguelles (1975) pointed out, subjected everything to a monetary value, and made all organic functions subservient to this abstract and mechanical process of time reckoning. On the same subject, Mumford (1963) added that eternity ceased gradually to serve as the measure and focus of human action. The utilization of clocks, watches and the chronometer in the West constituted a psychological liberation of man from Nature. According to Tiryakien (1979) as time-keeping became independent of the cruder methods of measuring time - the clouds that could paralyze the sundial, or the freezing that could stop the water-clock - so Western man grew independent of the "emergencies" of Nature and in turn ignored the time dimensions of the various systems in Nature.

Today Western man, or modern man, lives constantly in the province of the clock. The clock measures time - seconds, minutes, hours - by the mechanical translation of the rotations of a wheel or the vibrations of a tuning fork within the clock, into the movements of a pointer. The pointer as it moves adds up the seconds, minutes, hours and, if we wish, the days of the month. Ornstein (1972) has remarked that the more constant the internal mechanism of the clock the better, for one hour must be defined as the equal of any other in linear time, otherwise a consistent sequencing of events could





not be maintained. According to the clock one event follows another, one hour follows another, in a strict unchanging sequence.

The unavoidable result of the experiencing of time by Western man through the medium of the clock, is linearity. The past, the present and the future consist of a sequence of enduring events, one following another; and this mode of temporal experience forms the basis of personal and cultural life. This linear concept of time allows Western man to plan for a future, to arrange actions well in advance, and to coordinate action on an individual as well as a collective basis. The clock is essential to the coordination of such action, and to the successful performance of manipulative tasks requiring precise and sequential construction of time. Ornstein (1972) has observed that this precise timing of events underlies a great deal of scientific inquiry, and, indeed, this linear, sequential, enduring time of the Western world was necessary for the functioning of a complex technological society.



## CHAPTER 2 - TIME AND TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES

### Anthropologists, Time and Traditional Societies

Linder (1970) in his comparison of the exploitation of time in different cultures distinguished three different types of cultures: namely; cultures with a time surplus, cultures with a time affluence, and cultures suffering from a time famine. Cultures which have a superfluity of time, he has said, were to be found in the poorest countries.

Linder's statements with respect to time and the 'poor' countries, a term which is almost interchangeable with 'traditional' societies, is significant to the field of study with which this research is concerned. Linder (1970) has stated that an interesting picture of how the attitude to time in poor cultures differed from what people in the Western world were used to is given by the anthropological literature. But he further admits, regrettably, that the mapping of different culture's conceptions of time were not, to judge from the literature, taken as a very important task by anthropological research.

Quite apart from the fact that the literature on the cross-cultural nature of time proved to be inadequate, Linder's other statement, his reference to the



anthropological literature as the source for acquiring the knowledge of time in others cultures, is to the writer even more significant.

Though the statement which follows borders on the sociology of knowledge, which is not the domain of this thesis, the writer holds strongly to the belief that an understanding of the writings of Western social scientists, and particularly of anthropologists (since they purport to interpret man's past and particularly the past of traditional man), are vitally important to an understanding of time in non-modern societies. This researcher, therefore, though acknowledging the contributions of anthropologists, tends to see what they have said as representative of a particular regional world view, namely that of the Western world.

The social scientist is an important element in this piece, because with the rise of the sciences in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (as has already been shown the people of Europe underwent some fundamental changes in their perceptions of the world) new paradigms of time, and of man's evolutionary history came to be accepted. One assumption which science made and accepted was the universalization of the theories derived from its investigations, the natural laws discovered by the scientist.

It is from this particular stance that the Western



social scientist, as he came in contact with other non-Western cultures, sought to interpret the cultural differences he experienced. He sought to rationalize his perceptions of other cultures on the basis of a theory of deviance from what he accepted as the norm. The result of this approach manifested itself in a significant body of literature which accepted a view of traditional peoples as seen through European eyes.

Gibson (1974) defined this process very well when he said that the first stage of anthropology was characterized by the fact that other cultures were considered 'unusual' but not radically 'strange'. The anthropologists considered the native as different, but this difference was one of degree: he was a less advanced, less civilized European; he was unscientific, and so on. Gibson (1974) further stated that in essence, the native was considered child-like, a characterization which was objected to, but which continues to be still a lingering presupposition of much current work. The Darwinianism of the times assured one that the native culture was nothing in its own right - it was simply EN ROUTE toward becoming like the anthropologists' own culture.

The African writer Ali Mazrui (1980) has commented on this European view of Africans, noting that Africans





have often complained about how different branches of knowledge that developed in the Western world have, over time, attempted to scale down everything African, sometimes consciously and, at other times, subconsciously.

Mazrui (1978) has cited an example of this Euro-centric attitude as demonstrated by the Oxford historian, Hugh Trevor-Roper. Trevor-Roper, he said, dismissed the history of Africa as meaningless, and considered it only when viewed from the perspective of the history of the Europeans in Africa.

Trevor-Roper's attitude is not unique, but as Mazrui (1978) contends, such a position is patently absurd because any society or culture has to have an historical background in the sense of past events which lead to its present dimensions.

History, as most European writers consider it, is concerned with the nature of the evidence available about the society's past, and judgment as regards the significance or importance of that society's historical relevance is based on the verifiable evidence which supports the historical account of the events of the past. Under this definition of history, the majority of African societies supposedly were un-historical because they were pre-literate. Historical evidence was viewed as documentation and documents were equated with the written word.



Thus Trevor-Roper considered African history purely as a colonialist history - the history of Europe in Africa.

The anthropologist emerged (it must not be forgotten) just as Europe was about to embark upon a very aggressive policy of colonialism. It emerged with a specific assigned task - to study the non-literate peoples of the world. Such study fitted in well with the colonialist policy of most Western governments. They were able to exploit that information and use it to their advantage to manipulate and control traditional peoples and their resources.

But the anthropologist, it must be noted, served a similar function to the historian of European civilization - he recorded the past of these traditional societies. There is only one crucial difference, however, between the historian and the anthropologist. The past of the traditional society is also its present. The anthropologist viewed this phenomenon with his own cultural biases and considered these societies as static, unchanging and non-progressive.

The anthropologist as the observer and interpreter of traditional existence denied any meaning to the past of traditional cultures; since these cultures lacked any "progress" motive they were relegated to a particular status and given consideration only in terms



of a negative image when compared to Europe.

In considering traditional societies as extensions of a development occurring in Europe and America, the anthropologists with their Euro-centric vision, first, could not recognize these cultures as autonomous and independent in their own right; and secondly, they could not see these cultures as having their own past, or an internal dynamism of their own to guide their development.

Aguessy (1977) has commented on this particular Euro-centric view, pointedly asking: how was it possible that many thinkers were tempted to situate the collective times of different cultures in relation to a homogenous time and a history with a specific orientation? He expressed the hope that one day it may perhaps be possible to show that all societies tended to see their own attitudes to time as the only valid yardstick. Aguessy (1977) is convinced, however, that many thinkers from countries which have dominated others are tempted by the idea of a universal time which will establish the perspective for all others. These thinkers, he noted, identify the present of others with their own past, in the process jumbling together events that were of far-reaching significance to those who experienced them; while treating as rigidly immobile something which has its own subtle dynamics.



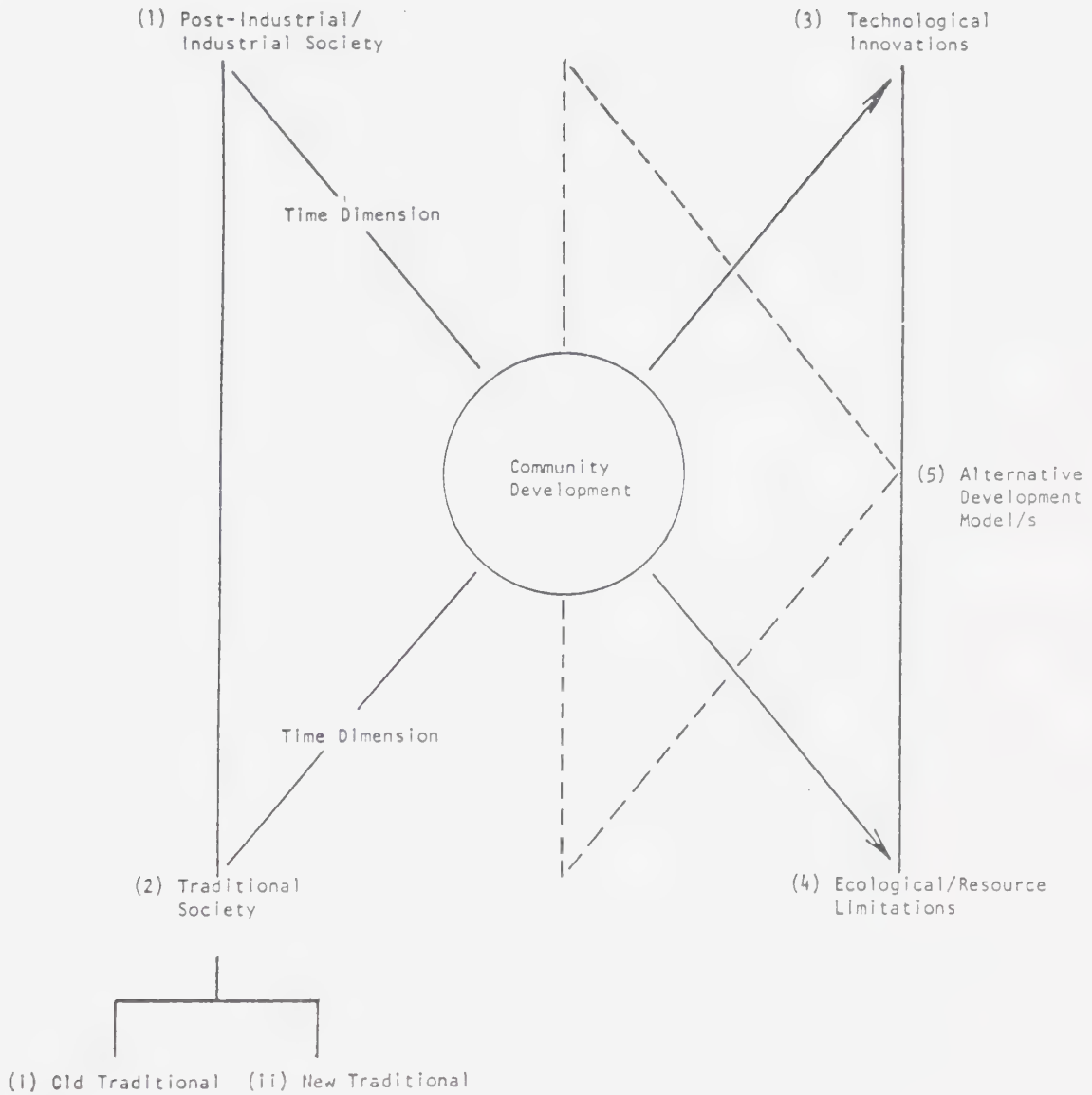


Fig. 1 Community Development and its Relationship to Time Dimensions





Leaving aside the whole question of a universal time, it is perhaps appropriate at this time to explore and try to apprehend the time dimensions of traditional cultures. In most of the anthropological literature there is often a distinction made between industrial and pre-industrial societies. This distinction is made with some exclusivity, but consciously or unconsciously it comes through clearly, that by some God-given right the Euro-cultures of the world are the only ones with a manifest destiny to be modern.

The words used to describe traditional societies are in themselves worthy of a sociological study. Traditionalism is considered as pathological, immobile, changeless, archaic, mythical; all of these time designations, as Aguessy (1977) has noted, the anthropologists have assigned disdainfully and exclusively to pre-industrial and non-industrial societies.

In Figure 1 the researcher has attempted to represent the time concepts of traditionalism under two labels. The first is considered to be the 'old traditional' and essentially refers to those cultures which at one point in time achieved a state of relatively high culture. Countries like China, India, Egypt, Iran, can be included in this category. The second group includes the countries which have remained relatively simple in their organizational development, material



culture, and depends upon an oral history to verify their past rather than a written script. This group is referred to as the 'new traditional'.

The approaches to these two categories of traditional societies are quite interesting when viewed from the literature which pertains to the subject, and the attempts made to distinguish between industrial/post-industrial societies and traditional societies. In cases where human existence has remained simple, anthropologists have referred to such people as having a magical perception of their world. Where they have evolved more complex systems of social organization, and their past has proved to be historically verifiable, they are referred to as mythical in their outlook.

The magical vision is one which has attributed to the traditional perception an immobile, repetitive outlook on life. Magical man's life, according to Barfield (1965), was organized around social and communal activities represented by certain rites and initiatory ceremonies. These occurrences allowed him the opportunity to immerse himself in total collective communion, generating collective mental states of extreme emotional intensity, too effectively lived to be properly imagined.

Eliade (1954) has also dealt with this magical



vision of primitive man where he contends that an act only becomes real to him insofar as it initiates or repeats an archetype. Reality is acquired solely through repetition or participation; everything which lacks an exemplary model is meaningless, or lacks reality.

According to Eliade (1954) an act only acquires a certain reality through the repetition of certain paradigmatic gestures. Through these gestures there is an implicit abolition of profane time, of duration, of history and he who reproduces the exemplary gesture thus finds himself transported into the mythical epoch in which its revelation took place.

The archetypal or primordial happening refers to the time when man identified with the whole. The ritualistic life of magical man is thus an attempt at recapturing the pristine purity of the origin, and rituals are significant points of time which convert and give continuity to the community in its renewal cycles of that origin.

Magical man, therefore, reverts time and time again to the re-enactment of the archetypal - the repetition of an act, the mythical happening, the occurrence - which took place in a time of 'long, long ago'; or the dream time. He seeks constantly to recapture that moment. In fact, he relives it through



his rituals and myths. Magical man lives within the archetypal past, and that past is, in a way, also his present. Van der Leeuw (1957) has also pointed out that the growth of consciousness, in the life of primitive and ancient man, was made manifest and real only through the rites that repeated the primordial events. The primordial experience, when reproduced and represented anew, acquired a sense of duration and consistency, and so became real time.

In the words of Frankfort (1946) the ancients experienced human life as part of a widely spreading network of connections which reached beyond the local and the national communities into the hidden depths of nature and the powers that rule nature. The purely secular - insofar as it could be granted to exist at all - was the purely trivial. Whatever was significant was embedded in the life of the cosmos.

Throughout the writings of these authors one slowly develops a certain perception, an attitude towards traditional man whether he is considered as part of a classical culture of some by-gone age, or whether he is, as Frankfort (1946) puts it, 'a modern savage'.

There is in these writers a tendency to view traditional man on some sort of evolutionary scale of consciousness, not that the content of what is said is wrong; the literature coming out of the ecology and





environmental movement of the present is saying exactly the same thing, but the ethnocentricity is there. The anthropological colonialism between 'us' as civilized and 'they' as savage and primitive is blatantly present.

Frankfort (1946) has exemplified this particular attitude in the following excerpt:

"The ancients, like the modern savages, saw man always as part of society, and society as embedded in nature and dependent upon cosmic forces. For them nature and man did not stand in opposition and did not, therefore, have to be apprehended by different modes of cognition. We shall see, in fact, in the course of this book, that natural phenomena were regularly conceived in terms of cosmic events. We touch here upon a distinction between the ancients and us which is of the utmost significance for our inquiry.

"The fundamental difference between the attitudes of modern and ancient man as regards the surrounding world is primarily an "It"; for ancient - and also for primitive - man it is a 'thou'".

Frankfort's arguments are well taken and are not quoted here in a spirit of disagreement, but the researcher may choose to differ with his opinion if an evolutionary approach to this whole field of speculative as opposed to non-speculative thought is accepted. Soyinka (1976), as an African writer, comes very close to Frankfort's interpretation of the world view of mythical man. In a comparison of how the African and the European world view differs from each other, Soyinka has given the following illustration:



According to Soyinka (1976) the European mind saw the cause of human anguish as viable only within strictly temporal capsules. The African, however, transcended the cause of individual disfunction and recognized in tragic happenings a reflection of a far greater disharmony in the communal psyche. A breakdown in the moral order of African traditional society implied, in the African world view, a rupture in Nature.

It is not the intention of the writer to get too deeply involved in the field of consciousness, or modes of thought, and the specific relationship to sociocultural time, which is beyond the scope of this paper. The writer, however, acknowledges the importance of this area of study to sociocultural time.

The mythical perception of time then was not so much quantitative and abstract as it was qualitative and concrete. Frankfort (1946) has noted that mythopoeic thought does not know time as a uniform duration or as a succession of qualitatively different moments. He has further suggested that the concept of time as it is used in mathematics and physics is as unknown to early man as that which forms the framework of modern history. Early man, he contends, does not abstract a concept of time from the experience of time.

The sentiments expressed by the authors I have quoted



recognize a difference in perception between Western man and traditional man. There is a paradigmatic shift in consciousness or perception of time, but the point which remains debatable is the positive or negative aspects of the shift and the implications for mankind today. This is a question we will have to return to but further consideration of time dimensions and traditional man must take priority at present.

#### Traditional Man and Time: An Alternative View

Traditional man was not exclusively without some tools for measuring time. Chronology performs an important function in non-historical societies where a written medium of communication is absent. In these societies, as well as those of the ancient civilizations, chronology served to link the present with the past, and give a sense of continuity to the community. Sometimes the wisest men in the community gave their allegiance and devoted attention to this aspect of their culture. They committed to memory the events of the past which were significant to the community or an individual within the community. Haley (1976) in his book Roots gave one of the more spectacular examples of the chronological aspect of a traditional African society.

The place of history in traditional society was



occupied by the collective memory of the ancestors. The names of the ancestors were chronicled to provide linkages with the past, and through genealogical memory dimensions of time were established which can be considered impressive even by today's standards. Toulmin and Goodfield (1965) have mentioned that genealogy was a social act of the first importance, establishing a community's roots in their past, and spinning the lifeline which joined it back to earlier times.

It cannot be denied that implicit within the chronological function is an awareness of temporality, but that temporality moves backward in time to establish a link with the ancestors. Human continuity, however, is not unidirectional. Soyinka (1976) has attempted to clarify this point in considering the familiar English adage of 'the child is father of the man'. Neither 'child' nor 'father' as he has pointed out, is a closed or chronological concept. In the African world-view the world of the unborn is as evidently older than the world of the living as the world of the living is older than the ancestor-world.

In traditional societies the key moments of an individual's life: birth, puberty, initiation, marriage, procreation, old age, death, are all important chronological events. Equally so, on the community or national





level, the cycles of the seasons with different activities - sowing, cultivating, harvesting, hunting - fall within the cycle of calendarical recurrences. The calendar deals with recurring events; chronology deals with events which occur but once. But neither of these two modes of experiencing time could be said to have any relationship to the abstract nature of time of modern society. We find confirmation of this viewpoint from Shotwell (1949) who has admitted that neither the calendar nor chronology was worked out in the first place to discover time and keep track of it. Both are concerned with events and the problem of tracing their relationships, not with what lies between them.

On both the individual and collective levels, therefore, there are points of time which are recognized by traditional man, but these are merely periods which possess peculiar qualities of time and not time itself. Time for mythical/traditional man is not a neutral and abstract frame of reference, but a succession of recurring points or phases, each charged with a peculiar value and significance. Time, as Eliade (1954) has remarked but makes possible the appearance and existence of things. It has no final influence upon their existence.

Kagame (1977) has tended to confirm this view in the following passage:



"In traditional Bantu culture ... time is a colorless, neutral entity as long as it is not marked or stamped by some specific event; an action performed by the pre-existent, by man or animal, a natural phenomenon (earthquake, appearance of a comet, eclipse of the sun, an accident caused by lightning, flood, drought, etc.). As soon as the action or the event impinges on time, the latter is marked, stamped, individualized, drawn out of its anonymity, and becomes the time of that event.

"It should be noted in this connection that the Bantu have no substantive such as those which exist in the languages of Euro-American culture to denote 'time' in the abstract sense. For the Bantu, the only time is the time of this or that, the time proportions for this or that. The time thus marked and individualized by the event may be very short or very long, depending on the duration of the event which individualizes it. In speaking of the monarch, of a particular armed expedition or invasion, the terms reign, expedition and invasion are synonymous with time, for they are included in such formulations as: during the reign of so-and-so, when so-and-so launched such-and-such an expedition, etc. Once the event which stamped time has come to an end, the empty moments are devoid of any reference-point, and their passing is marked only by the countless activities of everyday life. The latter are undoubtedly important for each existent, and each individual knows them to be marked by his own daily business, but the principle remains true: these personal activities are also interspersed with empty, insignificant moments".

Thus the temporal dimensions of time for mythical/traditional man found expression through the regulative institutions of chronology and the calendar, but these institutions merely marked or gave qualitative meaning to 'times' or phases in the life of the individual or collective. The temporal dimensions of time for traditional man were neither linear nor time-bound.



Traditional man patterned his life on a cosmic wheel, and that patterning created an elemental science quite different from that of the modern era.

It would be remiss of us if we did not deal briefly with this elemental science of ancient man. There is at present no organized body of literature devoted to this subject, but the writer is convinced that there is enough information relevant to this whole area of an 'elemental science' which deserves greater understanding and study than that which is given to it at the present.

It cannot be denied that the abstraction of time and the corresponding control of time which the Western world developed, has enabled it greatly to make the 'progress' it has made. This has encouraged it to make certain assumptions, not the least of which included the assumption that they are the logical extensions of history, representatives of a unique stage of human evolution; another assumption which was made is that there is no alternative to the natural acceptance of their authority. These assumptions are maintained by attributing to ancient societies the same ambitions that rule the present modern era, and by denying the possibility of a universal civilization in any age but the present. But is it also possible



that the recurring, cyclical nature of time in the world of ancient man may very well have been a recognition of the cyclical occurrences in nature and the social life of man as a way, a means, of creating or establishing conditions which are time-transcendent in their manifestations?

Michell (1972) has referred to this elemental science as the hermetic or secret tradition which has encompassed a visionary quest for a simple formula to express the one creative process that governs the entire range of cosmic motion. This vision of a comprehensive world system has remained an eternal poetic truth, an infallible stimulus to the imagination and thus a potential influence in human affairs.

This imaginative stimulus Michell (1972) has suggested was at the foundation of human society in ancient times. It encompassed a natural human longing for a true understanding of the cosmic order, and an appreciation for a model consistent with a harmonious way of life.

From this centre ancient man viewed his world and established relationships with nature and other men to safeguard and maintain a society in accordance with cosmic harmony. Cosmology was therefore, according to Michell (1972), the reigning science, for by knowledge





of the laws of growth and celestial motion it was found possible to divine the appropriate response to any circumstance, to harmonize conflicting interest, to predict and thus to influence the course of events.

Ancient man understood the relationship existing between human society and cosmic rhythms. The great magicians and astrologers of those days attached just as much importance to the close study and observation of Nature as his modern counterpart - the scientist. The study of the heavens and the movement of the stars were undertaken to measure the rhythms of cosmic forces for the purpose of transmitting these cosmic influences. The ancients believed that with the coming of a new age important psychic occurrences took place.

The science of astrology was designed by ancient man to better understand these forces and influences in order to preserve the balance in society according to divine law. Michell (1972) has observed that a living society, like any other organism, was in a constant state of change and that if these changes were not taken into account in the adoption of rules and conventions suitable for the age, relationships began to deteriorate, leading to sullenness, frictions and outbreaks of violence. According to Michell (1972) the social order has failed to respond in a sensitive way to the influences prevailing at the time; it has fallen



in danger of destruction through the release of forces generated by the suppressed aspirations of its members. The recognition of this fact in antiquity accounted for the stability and long endurance of civilizations in countries such as Egypt and China where the rulers observed these changes, both those current and those portended, and anticipated them in their actions. In this way the ages succeeded each other without revolutionary disturbance; tired dynasties gave way when their time had come and were replaced in almost ritual fashion, a process made possible by the existence of an established astrological tradition.

Can Michell's argument be taken lightly in view of the fact that recent research in the field of biological rhythms, such as Luce (1971), shows that we are strongly influenced by many cyclical rhythms? We are at present at the beginning stages of trying to understand the influences of these cyclic systems on the individual, but we as yet know very little of the application of cyclical rhythms to our socio-cultural environment.

Indeed Nisbet (1973) in his article "The Quest for Community: made a rather profound statement. He said "the spreading sense of spiritual emptiness we find in so many parts of the civilized world today has its origin in the failure of the modern religions to provide the feeling of authority and the glow of meaning in a cosmic purpose that is at the heart of the ancient and most traditional religions.



We may commonly think of religion as concerned with the supernatural, and it usually is, but the deepest roots of religion lie in this earth, in man's experience of the social and moral community that religion has everywhere provided in one shape or another. Merely look at the oldest and most powerful of religions. In them all we find the fundamental elements of man's existence on earth - birth, growing up, marriage, old age, death and, yes, even the food we eat and the clothing we wear - given the special kind of sanctification that is the clue to the sacred. The sacred itself arises from the prolonged sense of the communal, of intimate, organic relationship with others".

Leiss (1976) has similarly pointed out, from an economic perspective, that to a greater or lesser extent in all pre-modern societies the economy - considered as the organized production of the material necessities of life - was embedded within a total cultural milieu which regulated the circulation of goods according to social norms and determined what kinds of things could be exchanged. The division of labour, investment in technological innovation, and the exploration of natural resources were governed only in part by principles of productive efficiency.

Cosmology as the supreme science of ancient man had a direction and a purpose, according to Michell (1972) which sought a formula that could express the one creative process



governing the entire range of cosmic motion. This attitude, when contrasted to the present modern era, was profoundly different. Time in the context of technological and industrial society as Ellul (1973) remarked, has little intrinsic value. Nothing in the time of technological society any longer has order, ordination, or any qualitative reciprocal variety. Everything flows with insipid liquidity. Yesterday and tomorrow are meaningless. Technological time, he has concluded, was invertebrate, meaningless. Time is invertebrate.

Nasr (1976) has commented that most people will admit as a fact today that the harmony between man and nature has been destroyed. But he has suggested that not everyone has realized that this disequilibrium was due to the destruction of the harmony between man and God. He has further suggested that this disequilibrium involved a relationship which could be applied to all knowledge. The modern sciences themselves, he has noted, were the fruit of a set of factors which far from being limited to the domain of nature, concerned all Western man's intellectual and religious heritage.

Kayser (1970), another writer on the subject, has also explored this cosmic dimension of ancient man in his book Akroasis. He said of the peoples of the ancient mythical era that they possessed each his own cherished, sacred canon of cosmology. This canon was embodied in the





native laws, customs, legends, symbols, architecture, as well as in the ritual of everyday life.

'Akroasis' was a study, according to Kayser (1970), which has attempted to bring to modern man an awareness, an understanding of the ancient canon of past civilizations. The word carries or has corresponding connotations to the world 'harmonics', as used in a musical sense. However, Kayser (1970) has applied a much wider meaning to the word, and has related it to the ancient Greek science which spoke of the 'harmony of the spheres'. 'The harmony of the spheres' of course, according to both Kayser (1970) and Grossinger (1979), related to the science of astrology, and astrology to the ancients was the science of pure time and correspondence in the field of correlatable events of a major nature.

Harmonics implied a specific mode of thought which relates to an understanding of the terms "measure" and "value", measure as a term for the order of things and "value" as a term for the laws of things. In harmonics there was a recognition that quantities - material things measurable by means of numbers - had a spiritual meaning, or psychic value.

In the musical tradition of harmonics there was recognition of the correspondence between the tone produced by a particular piece of material and the variations of



tones which resulted in that same piece of material being greater or smaller. The principles of measure and value, according to Kayser (1970), entered into a miraculous union: each recognized itself in the other, the measure of the string saw itself reflected in the value of the experienced, sensed tone, and the value of this tone saw itself reflected in the measured length of the string.

This idea of harmonics, as Kayser (1970) noted, could be traced to ancient Greece, and in particular the Pythagorean School, but it was not exclusively applied to music. The Pythagoreans applied harmonics to matter generally. Matter acquired a structural counterpart anchored in the psyche, and the spiritual and intellectual became anchored in harmonial shapes and forms linking being and value, world and soul, matter and spirit.

Echoes of Kayser's thinking can be found in the thoughts of the African writer Wole Soyinka though expressed in a different context and on another dimension: Wole (1976) has stated that where society has lived in a close inter-relation with Nature and has regulated its existence by natural phenomena within an observable process of continuity - ebb and tide, waxing and waning of the moon, rain and drought, planting and harvest - the highest moral order was seen as that which guarantees a parallel continuity of the species.



Within this framework, that which he calls 'the metaphysics of the irreducible', man acquired knowledge of birth and death as a part of the human cycle, saw in the wind a moving, cleansing, destroying, winnowing force, ascribed to earth and sun life-sustaining verities, and so on. All of these aspects of nature served as matrices within which mores, personal relationships, even communal economics were formulated and reviewed. Because of this close relationship, because of this inseparable connection of each individual with the fate of the entire community, a rupture in the individual's normal functioning not only endangered this shared reality but threatened existence itself.

De Lubicz (1977, 1978) and his wife Isha (1978), both of whom devoted some fifteen years to the study of the art, architecture and writings of the ancient Egyptians, have given further verification to the deep insight and thought patterns of this ancient people. In his introduction to R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz's work Symbol and the Symbolic: Egypt, Science and the Evolution of Consciousness, Lawlor (1978) contended that the Egyptians were able to encapsulate in their writing and architecture the basic pattern structures of the natural universe, and that this symbolic attitude of ancient knowledge, cultivated the intellect to the extent of perceiving all of the phenomenon of nature itself as a symbolic writing which revealed the forces and



the laws governing the energetic and even spiritual aspects of the universe.

Lawlor (1978) further remarked that civilizations such as ancient Egypt (even though we rather presumptuously consider their religious beliefs as 'primitive animal worship') were not actually involved in the worship of the animal itself but were involved in a consecration of the vital function which the animal incarnated. As such, it was not in reality a worship, but more a mediation which was used to support and clarify an essential function of nature, which was a 'Neter' god.

De Lubicz (1977) has pointed out that the word 'Neter' was conventionally rendered as 'God', and in the ancient temple civilization of Egypt the 'Neter' had a number correspondence. But number did not designate quantities. Number was instead considered to be concrete definitions of energetic formative principles of nature.

The symbol, according to de Lubicz (1978) served as a material representation of qualities and functions which were non-material; such qualities and functions were considered subjective in man or subliminal in nature. The symbol served as a trigger, an evocative medium which awakened in ancient man a perception of the world and an awareness of himself as having a dimension of existence beyond the material.

The symbolic was the medium through which ancient





man expressed what can be referred to as a 'vitalist' philosophy. The symbol allowed for the expression, without formulation, of identities of nature. The symbol acted as the concept, and the concept had value through the idea implied. This vitalist philosophy related functions only and not factors; the symbol was used as a synopsis to convey an implied functional idea.

The three writers, Michell, Kayser and de Lubicz, have brought out the psychological depth of the mythical reality. Mythical man, ancient man, traditional man or whatever we choose to call him, did not live his life at a level which was in any way inferior to that of modern man. Myth, as Roszak (1972) has stated, was simply a depth dimension of the human mind encompassing an old wisdom which we are only now beginning to rediscover and appreciate. Cooper (1975), in an article titled "Alternative Logic in Primitive Thought'", has also stated that primitive thought incorporated a non-standard, many-valued logic of the type Reichenbach has used for dissolving anomalies of quantum physics, and that the natives' employment of this logic has a similar rationale to Reichenbach's own. Primitive thought, therefore, as once considered, has ceased to be anomalous and problematic as it was usually supposed. Again, to refer to Lawlor's (1978) introduction to de Lubicz's work Symbol and the Symbolic where he has stated that de Lubicz viewed modern science and particularly



subatomic physics which has expanded its knowledge of matter to the point where Nature has to be considered supra-rational or as being beyond the limits of rational methods and formulae, and that these new discoveries and ideas have demanded a new and as yet unfound vocabulary, as well as a radically different approach to education and knowledge itself. This view, as Lawlor (1979) has stated, has placed de Lubicz at variance with some contemporary writers such as Capra (1978) who, in The Tao of Physics, has argued that modern man can, with present scientific methods, move directly into a science with spiritual dimensions. De Lubicz, as Lawlor (1978) has contended, has denied that possibility, but instead has emphasized that the achievement of a sacred science required a transformation of the mind, a process which would considerably alter modern man's relationship to knowledge and its expression.

The statements made by Cooper and Lawlor challenge certain belief systems very prevalent in the human sciences of the western world and particularly those of the discipline of anthropology. Anthropology has been chosen here for some analysis because it has been the discipline most involved in describing the processes whereby society and culture manifest themselves and change and persist through time. Anthropology has been chosen specifically because, to the extent that it has studied the sociocultural aspects



of man's life. It has, according to Vilakazi (1977), been overwhelmingly the study and analysis of the lives and societies of non-Europeans.

Western anthropologists have approached traditional cultures with certain basic presuppositions, perhaps the most obvious and pernicious being the belief that Western culture is superior to all other cultures. On this issue, the Ethiopian anthropologist Legesse (1973) has remarked that the Western anthropologist "becomes an eager accomplice of his culture and his work becomes the source of legitimacy for the cultural peddler whose task is to disseminate Western civilization to the rest of mankind ... We are reminded again and again that our traditional cultures are out of gear with the modern world and that their persistence in an urban industrial context is a barrier to development".

For Third World peoples it is important, indeed essential, to recognize the ideological nature of the theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of traditional cultures espoused by the Western social scientist. To do so one must understand the historical/social situation from which academic anthropology emerged. It emerged out of Europe - Great Britain, France, Germany - during the last three decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth. At its emergence, Europe was undergoing vast expansion and increasing its influence on traditional cultures. The Berlin Congress



of 1884-5 which determined the rules for the scramble of Africa can be taken as an indicative point of reference for the colonial era which followed. Anthropology then, in its origin and the cultural and political environment from which it emerged in Europe, can be expected to have produced distortions of the cultures it has studied.

Kuper (1979) has illustrated this affiliation between anthropology and politics with reference to the anthropology department at the University of Leiden. Leiden anthropology, he has stated, developed in a symbiotic relationship with the colonial administration in Indonesia. Its great pre-war flowering yielded a series of masterly structural studies of Indonesian societies with particular attention being paid to the descent groups, marriage cycles, and classification systems which were so elaborated in the cultures of the region. When, however, as a result of historical accidents, attention shifted in the mid-fifties, to New Guinea, quite different social processes claimed the attention of the anthropologists. In part as a response to specific characteristics of social life in New Guinea, studies focussed on individualistic manipulation of institutions, competition and innovation. Later again, for extrinsic reasons, the Netherlands West Indies became the major focus of research; and here quite new, macro-sociological problems, particularly of community relations, came to the fore.





The shifts in anthropological perspectives, he has suggested, not only reflected differences in the nature of the societies being studied; they also corresponded to changes in the political interests of the Netherlands. In Indonesia, anthropologists were collaborating with conservative colonial administrators, fearful of social change, and favourable to the study of traditional ideologies. In New Guinea, by contrast, the studies were carried out under a Dutch administration committed to rapid development towards self-government; and so, naturally enough, the social scientists wrote about problems of change and adaptation. Anthropology, in Honigman's (1976) opinion, on the whole accepted colonialism and worked within its framework.

Albert (1970) has considered it the exception in anthropological research to find serious consideration given to the question of what was thought by the people whose world view the anthropologist was trying to understand. The meaning, structure, and internal logic of a conceptual system, he contended, were accessible to observation but were rarely found on the surface level represented by descriptions of rituals or the text of myths.

Conspicuously absent from the literature, she has added, were papers on logic, epistemology, technology, and other obviously intellectual facets of world-views. The omissions, she concluded, reflected a point of view about



non-Western, non-scientific conceptual systems that were incompatible with good research.

These criticisms levelled at the Western anthropologist have had some effect. They are beginning to create an understanding and an acceptance of traditional cultures as not merely unusual but as independently different, and radically other in their own development from the Western world. The realization that different cultures perceive the world differently, and that the Western world-view is but one system among many is slowly being accepted. Gibson (1974) remarked "our way of organizing reality is but one system among many; we do not see things simply 'as they are' but as our culture, including our language as a special cultural institution, guides us to see them".

That anthropology has reached a period of crisis within the framework of the modern ideological paradigm is perhaps true. Legesse (1973) has asserted that Westerners have exhibited a powerful proclivity to identify their way of life with science and technology and to use this presumed link as the justification for the propagation of their culture. Not only have Westerners considered technology to be the unique product of their culture, but they have also tended to interpret their socio-cultural peculiarities as the direct product of technology. Even though the Westerner may blame his worst social ills on uncontrolled scientific developments, Legesse (1973) has stated he still



builds up a thesis that will legitimize his supremacist ideology. Yet even though in Kuhnian terms there is a recognition that the science-technology-progress paradigm has proved to be inadequate, no agreed upon paradigm has replaced the evolutionism of the nineteenth century.

The rise of technology to replace human energy in the production of goods for profit allowed for the accumulation of new wealth through inventions. Men began to transform Nature into goods for consumption and economic production expanded by applying rather than abiding by the Laws of Nature. Nature, in turn, became redefined into a composite of objects subject to transformation by technological expertise while drawing upon scientific understandings. Mankind, as Willhelm (1973) pointed out would no longer conceive its destiny in the immutables of Nature since technology could be implemented to command nature. Mazrui (1980) has succinctly noted that the technology of production declared war on nature. The epic of Western man has been a movement away from the sacred, both within himself and without in Nature. The result has posited man in a position where he finds himself as the only criteria for judging his own actions. He has to find immutable truths within the very social life he lives to justify his actions. As Willhelm (1973) has remarked, "the burden of man's own responsibility came to rest with social actions and could not be traced to



transcendental entities preceding human existence".

The sciences, as they evolved during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, presented a view of man and Nature devoid of possessing any aspect of the sacred. But Nature, viewed as sacred, established specific responsibilities of man towards Nature; these responsibilities served to limit the actions of man in his relationship to Nature.





## CHAPTER 3 - DEVELOPMENT AND TIME DIMENSIONS

### Development, Traditional Culture and Time

There is an interesting relationship between the concepts of development, modernization, national development and community development, and the thought processes surrounding these ideas need to be sought out and put into perspective if they are to be useful concepts within an emerging global community. Of course it must be realized that perceptions/conceptions of time dimensions, whether they are explicit or implicit, conscious or unconscious, underlie the assumptions made about development, etc., and condition and influence the images of the future.

Again, the importance of thoroughly understanding the conceptual and historical framework in which the concepts of development and modernization emerged cannot be too highly stressed. This analysis is essential to traditional peoples if they are to be genuine participants in shaping their own future. Such participation requires an involvement at the conceptual and ideological levels where projections of the future are shaped and determined. Without this analysis the Third World cannot consciously project alternative forms of development and alternative futures for themselves. If they remain excluded from the new paradigms of development concepts that must emerge in a global society, then it can



be expected, unwittingly or not, that they will be forced to become recipients and collaborators in schemes having no organic relationship to their cultural ethos. This can only lead to massive disruptive changes within the society and possible dominations from outside.

Traditional societies are not only faced with analysing the concepts of 'development' and 'modernization' as it has evolved through the social sciences of the Western world, but in the context of depleting resources, and ecological hazards, generated by the development of the industrial countries. It is also necessary to analyse the condition of development-ideology itself.

It is necessary to do so, according to Goulet (1973), because in the 'developed' societies themselves development has alienated its beneficiaries in compulsive consumption, created technological determinisms of various sorts, and generated both ecological pathology and warlike policies.

Modern society is faced with a crisis, a crisis which Gorz (1980) has suggested exists in the relation between the individual and the economic sphere; in the character of work; in our relations with nature; with our bodies; with our sexuality; with society; with future generations; with history - a crisis of urban life; of habitat; of medical practice; of education; of science.

The present mode of life in modern society, he has prophesied, is without a future; the children now being born



will use neither oil nor a number of now-familiar metals during their adult lives; and if current nuclear programs are implemented, uranium reserves will be exhausted by then.

He has acknowledged that for a hundred and fifty years industrial society has developed through the accelerated looting of reserves whose creation required tens of millions of years; and that until very recently all economists, whether classical or Marxist, have rejected as irrelevant or reactionary all questions concerning the long-term future - that of the planet, that of the biosphere, that of civilizations.

The picture painted by Gorz is a result of a particular development ideology called modernism. Modernity as an ideology of development is being questioned by many writers in the West today, so it is worthy of our examination.

'Development', as a concept used by the social sciences, refers basically to economic development, and falls within the purview of the discipline of economics. Economics itself, it should be noted, emerged out of the dramatic changes which occurred in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Those changes, as Eisenstadt (1973) has pointed out, were characterized by a complex division of labour, high levels of specialization, the growth of relatively autonomous markets, and the development of the industrial powers of production.



Though the discipline of economics concentrated exclusively on theories of development, the other disciplines of sociology, political science and social anthropology also made contributions and assumptions, and proposed many theories about the concepts of development and modernization.

Many of the queries of the social scientist in dealing with the characteristics of modern society have focused on the problem of the nature of tradition and its place in cultural and social life. Whether tradition was seen as the accumulation of customs from long ago, as Eisenstadt (1973) has remarked, or attachment to the past and the unquestioning acceptance of the usages and symbols of the past, the legitimization of any usage in terms of the past, or endowment of the past with qualities of sacredness, was indeed often viewed as opposed to both the qualitative and the organizational aspects of social life.

The development of the qualitative characteristics of modern societies, according to Eisenstadt (1973), was often conceived as tantamount to the decline of tradition. He has further noted that the many problematics specific to the development of liberty, rationality and justice, the erosion of the traditional bases of legitimization of the social order and the search for new bases related or derived from the idea of 'nontraditional' concepts of justice, rationality, liberty and progress which were often defined as the most





crucial problems facing modern societies - were seen as inherent in the decline or breakdown of tradition in these societies.

The dominant view of the social sciences considered tradition as a hindrance to development, and saw in the decline of traditional forces the possibility for the emergence of specific organizational aspects of modern life and especially the new institutional structures of an autonomous civil society and an industrial-capitalistic social order. The dialogue and discussion about tradition took place in Western Europe just at the time when those countries were undergoing a process of modernizing their own societies. It is not surprising, therefore, that the results of such discussion viewed tradition as the major criteria distinguishing pre-modern from modern societies. We find these opinions reflected in the social sciences where a dichotomous conception of traditional versus modern societies or of tradition versus modernity prevails.

Traditional society was depicted as static, with little differentiation or specialization. It was considered to have a low level of urbanization and literacy and relied upon a strong agrarian base for its main focus of population. In contrast, modern society was seen as possessing a very high level of differentiation, urbanization, literacy and exposure to mass media, and imbued with a continuous drive towards progress. Above all, traditional society was



conceived of as bound by the cultural horizons set by its tradition, and modern society was considered culturally dynamic with a strong orientation to change and innovation. That is why the Western world sees modernity as almost an exclusive prerogative of its own making. Modernity is a cultural product which stems from the industrial development of the West. It is the result of a specific regional experience.

According to Eisenstadt (1966) there was no question as to the historical source of the paradigm of modernization: "historically, modernization is the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America". Bernstein (1971) has said with greater clarity that the Western experience was seen as producing the model of modern society, and the general pattern of modernization was to be derived from what can be characterized alternatively as a particular type of development which was industrial-capitalist.

Modernization was viewed as a total social process associated with or subsuming economic development in terms of preconditions, concomitants and consequences of the latter. Among various writers there were differences of emphasis with respect to the meaning of modernization, partly due to its relationship with or derivation from the concept of development. But generally, it was accepted that



modernization was to be a model of global applicability. The science of development economics therefore rests on the central tenet of modernization, a term which is still almost wholly interchangeable with westernization. For the Third World to achieve progress and prosperity it was necessary to implement the modernization paradigm.

The concepts, therefore, of development, modernization, national development, are intricately linked. All Third World countries today have programs of national and economic policy involved with programs of planning to improve the standards of living in their countries. Community Development emerged out of this tapestry of concepts which altogether partakes of that ideology of development. Community Development emerged as a program essentially directed at organizing rural communities to produce more. It has been a rural-based movement in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and has been used as a strategy for development in most national programs in the Third World (United Nations, 1971).

Many traditional cultures, as Kanyeihamba (1974) has observed, are today faced with the prevailing theme of development and change - change of political institutions, change of economic structures, change of educational systems, change of history and ultimately change of values. All of these changes are linked to the chosen path of political and economic development of the new nations. On the socio-cultural level there are new leaders, parties, classes and



social relations emerging, on the economic level (for the new nations must deal with production), nationalization, agrarian reform, foreign investment, etc. Change is the order of the day in most traditional societies and a combination of all of these change processes does have the potential for conflict as it confronts the traditionalism of the indigenous cultures. Traditional cultures are engaged at an ideological level with ideas, concepts and theories resulting from this confrontation between a traditional way of life and the influences of development ideologies upon their cultures (Smith, 1974).

This study is not concerned with turning back the clock. The changes that occurred in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and continued on to the present have had a significant impact on the lives of people globally. The technology which has developed and which continues to be developed has universal implications for mankind. Plus, the structural changes that have occurred during the period of colonialism in the institutions of the traditional cultures, of which modern nationalism is a result, cannot be arbitrarily revoked. Life is a factor of change; change itself is not new to traditional cultures, but is a condition of existence itself. As such, the concern is with the nature of change. This study is equally concerned with the process of change. As Kanyeihamba (1974) has





stated, once we begin to talk about change we are immediately faced with searching questions. What is to be changed and why? How is change to be effected and by what means? What are the goals of change? What are the consequences of change? What motivates the people responsible for change and, lastly, what benefits, if any, accrue to the community for which the change is designed?

The condition of the Third World in its relationship with Europe over the past two hundred years leads one to question the development model as proposed by the Western world. What this writer is proposing is the need for traditional peoples and cultures to do their own analysis of their conditions and make their own independent decisions as to what future they see as desirable.

This study has repeatedly referred to the role of the Western social sciences in relation to the particular ideology of modernization or development. This study has focussed on this level of the ideological consistently because the writer sees the problem of development, in its essence, as one of ideas, ideas which can restore to a people the sense and the conscience of its organic unity. As Bennabi (1981) has so wisely observed, the most decisive turning points in the history of a given society might not be due to a shortage of means endangering its existence but to a lack of ideas.

A society which does not make its own guiding ideas, as Bennabi (1981) has suggested, will not be able to make



either its own consumer goods nor its equipment. It is not by means of ideas imported or imposed that a society can develop, it is by recovering its intellectual originality. Only when it has done so can it regain its political and economic independence.

Zentner (1979) is similarly convinced that the Third World, even though independent, has to begin to produce their own ideas. They must begin dynamically to generate their own ideas to guide their own development. He has appropriately stated that the Third World countries were variably situated respecting the continued borrowing of Western ideas and technologies. And, seemingly, in their haste to achieve higher material standards of welfare, have seldom hesitated to continue accepting essentially Western notions, whether these arrive in the guise of Historical Materialism, old-fashioned Christianity, modernized Capitalism, or whatever.

But regardless of the ideological 'packaging' or 'labelling' which has characterized such new and alien cultural borrowing, according to Zentner (1979) it was apparent that what was occurring was the rise of a new form of colonialism. This more modern colonialism was a technological colonialism, a self-imposed and self-deluding colonialism which an indigenous Western-educated, middle-class leadership was thrusting, often uncritically and



coercively, upon many unsuspecting Third-World peoples.

Bennabi and Zentner both raise interesting and fascinating ideas for the peoples of the Third World. Though Bennabi has posited his ideas in an Islamic framework, the writer feels he can take the liberty to extend these ideas to include traditional peoples generally. Bennabi (1981) has suggested that there exists a need for Third World peoples to repossess their cultures. He sees in that reclamation a repossession of a sense of purpose and identity. Because it is from their culture, their pre-colonial cultural heritage that they will derive a sense and a conscience of an organic unity.

Zentner (1979), on the other hand, has concretely stated that Third World peoples, because they have failed to do their own thinking, because they have accepted much too readily the notions or ideologies of the West, they have become vulnerable to the continued process of colonialism in the guise this time of a technological colonialism.

It becomes obvious and urgent, therefore, for traditional peoples to commune with their past, their pre-colonial cultural heritage, for it is through the identification with their past that their identity, their 'wholeness', their organic unity, is reestablished.

Sivanandan (1977), has stated that in order for the black\* man 'to positivize' his identity, he must go back and

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\* Sivanandan uses 'black' here to symbolize the oppressed



rediscover himself - in Africa and Asia - not in a frenetic search for lost roots, but in an attempt to discover living traditions and values. He must find, that is, an historical sense which is a sense of the timeless as well as the temporal, and of the timeless and temporal together, which can involve a perception not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence. Is it the presence of that past, the living presence, that he should now seek to discover. And in discovering where he came from he should realize more fully where he is at, and where, in fact, he is going.

The black man undertaking such a search will find, according to Sivananda (1977), that in Africa and Asia "there still remains, despite the centuries of white rule, an attitude towards learning which is simply a matter of curiosity, a quest for understanding - an understanding of not just the 'mattalled ways' on which the world moves, but of oneself, one's people, others whose life styles are alien to one's own - an understanding of both the inscope and fabric of life. Knowledge is not a goal in itself, but a path to wisdom; it bestows not privilege so much as duty, not power so much as responsibility. And it brings with it a desire to learn even as one teaches, to teach even as one learns. It is used not to compete with one's fellow beings for some unending standard of life, but to achieve for them, as for onself, a higher quality of life".

Sivananda has touched on one of the essential problems





of modernism, which is the need to perceive time and dimensions of time in terms of traditions and values which encompass a sense of the timeless as well as the temporal, and of the timeless and the temporal together. Modern societies with their linear view of time and their development-progress orientation to change have become unaware of the timeless quality, the temporal continuity, which exists as part of both the socio-cultural and the natural environment. In the use of the term 'time dimensions', the researcher wishes to convey both these aspects of time - time capable of apprehending the timeless, and the temporal as an integrated and integral unit.

Apprehending the cultural identity of one's past is not therefore an attempt to ensure ideological purity of some sort; that is not the intent, but to establish the confidence to independently create the ideas that can guide development, development that can escape colonialism - technological or otherwise.

It is therefore important that traditional peoples re-examine their past. In that journey towards the past traditional peoples will have to look at colonialism and assess its impact and its possible present influence on their cultures.



## Colonialism, Underdevelopment and Traditional Culture

Colonialism is that part of the history of traditional peoples in which European domination figured prominently. The term colonialism is used to describe that period of dominance. There are two aspects of this relationship on which this study wishes to focus attention: (1) the cultural nature of this dominance, and (2) the economic. Keep in mind that these two aspects of domination are separated here merely for the purpose of analysis. In reality, both the cultural and economic life of traditional peoples were utilized to support the colonial system.

The cultural aspect of any society, it must be realized, is that which enshrines the traditions of a people, its past and its history, and these in turn relate to its perceptions of time and continuity in an organic and lived reality. Therefore, in a real sense, the cultural aspect of a people's existence is that which safeguards the autonomous future of a people. This, as Mogado (1974) has said, Cabral recognized regarding the obstruction of a society's independent evolution as an attempt to arrest that society's historical development. Cabral (1970) himself, has observed that the principal characteristic common to every kind of imperialist domination was the negation of the historical process of the dominated people



by means of violently usurping the free operation of the process of development of the productive forces.

The economic dimension, therefore, cannot be separated from the cultural because colonialism, by arresting the autonomous development of the indigenous people's economic substructure necessarily denies their free cultural development (Mogado, 1974).

One should also be reminded that the economic and cultural relationships which exist in traditional society are interdependent. This relationship differs radically from 'modern' society where the first large scale attempt to found stability and authority was based not upon the earlier patterns of inherited privilege or traditional associations, according to Leiss (1976), but rather directly on the achievements of economic production and the satisfaction of needs. The emergence of capitalism in the modern era, he added, set this tendency in motion. Rodney (1972) has further pointed out that never before in any human society had a group of people seen themselves consciously functioning in order to make the maximum profit out of production.

It is from this perspective, the perspective of the realities of traditional societies, that the development ideologies of the West have to be examined. For these ideologies, when adopted by traditional societies, cannot fail to generate conditions of alienation among the peoples of these cultures. This is due simply to the fact that



such development theories relate to the conditions existing in the developed countries of the Western world, and have little or no relevance to the existing conditions of the Third World.

Frank (1970) was explicit in his assessment of this situation, noting that it was impossible to formulate adequate development theory and policy for the majority of the world's population who suffer from underdevelopment without first learning how their past economic and social history gave rise to their present underdevelopment. It is therefore necessary to study colonialism as a link between the pre-colonial traditional past and the present post-colonial traditional future.

Colonialism or colonial ideology, simplistically, justified and rationalized its rule on the basis of a 'civilizing' mission. The traditional peoples needed civilizing and the Europeans took it upon themselves to bring civilization, by which is meant European civilization, to the natives. That mission was often enforced through military conquest, the result being the plunder and destruction of a people's culture and civilization.

Colonialism fundamentally altered the process of development in Asia, Africa and Latin America - what is known today as the Third World. Economically, colonialism was designed to benefit the European countries. The colonizers forced people off land which was often communally owned.





This confiscation of the people's land by the colonizer did two things: one, it required people to work for the landlord or colonizer; two, it separated people from the means by which they had been producing food. Under these circumstances the traditional means of exchange were replaced by the foreigners' money and the people then had little choice but to buy those goods offered by the colonizer. People were forced to work on the plantations or in the mines. Thus their energies were diverted from producing their own food to producing food for export to Europe (Development Education Centre, 1974).

The result of this relationship with Europe produced dependent economies in most Third World countries. Colonialism disrupted the societies of the indigenous people and left a legacy of problems still evident today - poverty, hunger, disease, to name a few. These conditions were created by the colonial system, and are generally referred to as 'underdevelopment'.

Frank (1970) has argued that underdevelopment is not due to the survival of archaic institutions nor is it the result of the existence of capital shortage in regions that have remained isolated from the stream of world history. On the contrary, underdevelopment was and still is generated by the very same historical process which also generated economic development; the development of capitalism itself.



The social sciences of the nineteenth century, as we have seen, were primarily concerned with the disruptions and the new social structures emerging from industrialization within Europe. In the nineteen forties and fifties, as the new nations of the Third World gained their independence, there was renewed interest by European and Euro-American scholars or researchers in the future of the traditional peoples of the Third World nations. There was an upsurge of inquiry and interest on the part of the Western social scientist in the new nationalism of the Third World. The result of this particular interest was/is a focussed attention on a 'development' ideology linked to and closely associated with the whole concept of nationalism.

Bernstein (1971) has noted this preoccupation with development and nationalism, and further pointed out that the whole post nineteen-forty-five period of concern with development was expressed in a vocabulary of decolonization and government planning, and that the process itself became institutionalized in a proliferation of international agencies. Development became the intense study of the Western social scientist, and particularly the American social scientist. But this infatuation with development did not happen in a vacuum, as Bernstein (1971) has observed, but emerged out of a specific historical and global ideological orientation, and that orientation assumed that all these newly



emerging countries were in various stages of transition to modernization.

Again we find a return to the social sciences of the nineteenth century, and a period in European history which was primarily concerned with the disruptions and the new social forms resulting from industrialization. Europe again provided the context from which the concepts emerged to define the changes taking place in the emerging nations of the Third World. Within these concepts was a pattern, one which posited that the change processes occurring in the Third World were doing so along the same lines as Europe, and as such were defined in the jargon of dichotomous ideal-types such as status-contract, sacred-secular, mechanical-organic, etc.

This treatment of social change, as Bernstein (1971) noted, was also accommodated in varying degrees by the prevailing mode of structural-functional analysis. Sources of functionalism were drawn on to provide the dynamic of the differentiation-integration model of social change. But the fact remains that the characterization of change processes in the Third World in terms of these ideal-typical end points and the differentiation model of social change, both allowed a relationship to be subsumed under a wider and more general traditional/modern dichotomy. And this approach implied an evolutionary rationale implicit to development concepts



related to Third World societies.

The theory of "underdevelopment" has emerged from the Third World intellectuals in response to the many theories put forward by the intellectuals of the developed West to explain the underdevelopment of the Third World. Many of these theories can be found in the literature on modernization which has attempted to propose development strategies for the Third World.

Frank (1972) has adequately dealt with some of these theorists in his article "Sociology of Development and Underdevelopment of Sociology". This study will review this article briefly here, not in terms of an analysis of any one particular development theory, but in terms of some broader conceptual deficiencies from which these theorists operated. As Frank (1972) pointed out, the theorists from the West assumed that underdevelopment was the original stage of the traditional societies. As a result of this, little attention was paid to considering any stages prior to the present stage of underdevelopment. They applied the same approach to the developed societies, assuming that they were once underdeveloped but without seeing any relationship between the developed and the underdeveloped, an approach with Frank (1973) regarded as quite contrary to the fact since economic development and cultural change, under those assumptions, attributed a history to the developed countries





but denied all history to the underdeveloped ones.

Secondly, what the Western theorists have failed to take into account is the history of the now underdeveloped countries, or of the crucial relations they have had, and continue to have, with the now developed countries over the past several centuries. The Western theorists, in failing to recognize these relations, have also failed to attribute to the developed countries the cause for the destruction of the pre-existing fabric of these societies. This was most notably the case, Frank has asserted, in India which was de-industrialized; Africa, where the slave trade transformed society long before colonialism did so again; and Latin America, where the high civilizations of the Incas and the Aztecs were wiped out altogether.

Rodney (1972) in his book How Europe Underdeveloped Africa gave another example of this underdevelopment of the traditional societies, and has also refuted the claim of the civilizing mission of the Europeans. Taking Portugal as an example, he said that Portugal boasted that Angola, Guinea and Mozambique have been their possessions for 500 years, during which time a "civilizing mission" has been going on. But at the end of 500 years of shouldering the white man's burden of civilizing "African natives", the Portugese had not managed to train a single African doctor in Mozambique, and the life expectancy in Eastern Angola was less than thirty years. As for Guinea-Bissau, some insight



into the situation there was provided by the admission of the Portugese themselves that Guinea-Bissau was more neglected than Angola and Mozambique.

Woodis (1967) has taken Ghana as yet another example to demonstrate the relationship between the developed and the underdeveloped. At the time of her (Ghana) winning her independence in 1957, he explained, she found she was exporting bauxite, importing aluminum pots and pans; exporting palm-oil, importing soap; exporting timber, importing furniture and paper; exporting hides, importing boots and shoes. The world's largest cocoa producer, she was exporting raw cocoa and having to import every bar of chocolate or tin of processed cocoa she required.

Contrary, therefore, to the Western theorists' assumption of a traditional past of the underdeveloped societies where there was no development, it must now be recognized that 'no development' occurred because colonialism succeeded in supplanting the pre-existing social, political and economic structure of the traditional societies. And, with few exceptions, this structure was, and is, the cause of their underdevelopment (Frank, 1972). The historical relationship between the now underdeveloped and now developed countries shows that within the same historical process, the same cause - colonialism - which transformed the social fabric of the peoples whose countries are now underdeveloped,



also transformed the countries which are now developed.

What does this mean? It means that the poor nations, the developing countries, the traditional peoples of the world, are not developing from a starting point of being undeveloped. No, quite the contrary; the problem posed by the analysis of the underdevelopment/development continuum reveals that the poor nations in their relation to the growth and expansion of the West have been systematically underdeveloped. It follows, therefore, that in the historical context, in the projected time dimensions of the future, they must take up the task of development, not from a position of 'undevelopment' but from the position of 'underdevelopment'.

This analysis requires a shift in perspective. It demands an integrative approach to our understanding of the underdevelopment/development continuum, and in particular the time dimensions, both past (historical) and future. It seeks to bring to the forefront and make comprehensible the forces which have contributed and continue to contribute to the present poverty condition of traditional peoples.

The concept of underdevelopment refutes and negates the colonial ideology which seeks to disregard the historical and traditional past of a people. The ideology of underdevelopment is focussed on the development which might have occurred in traditional settings had colonialism not inter-



ferred and arrested the autonomous development of the traditional peoples. The concept has also brought into perspective the pre-colonial past and has linked that past with a post-colonial future. The analysis of underdevelopment has fundamentally changed the role of traditional peoples, giving to them the independence and autonomy to assess their past and give direction to their future. They, the traditional peoples, based on their cultural values and their collective identity as a people, assume the role of change agents and the responsibility for their own development. Development, then, becomes an independent search of a people for improved standards of living based on a true concept of self-identity and traditional values.

#### Culture, Language and Time Dimensions

One of the major characteristics which distinguishes one culture from another is language. As Fanon (1968) has pointed out in his now classic work Black Skin, White Masks, a man's whole world was expressed and implied in his language. Language is a way of thinking, of feeling, of being. It is primarily through language that members of a group or collectivity are able to communicate shared meanings and symbols. Language is the major vehicle whereby these shared meanings are transmitted. Language is identity. According to Fanon (1968) language played an important and





significant role in a people's psychological makeup; to speak a language was to assume a culture and support the weight of a civilization.

Whorf (1956), on the other hand, looked at language from a slightly different perspective. He has considered language as an important factor which has determined the way in which an individual perceived reality and behaved with respect to it. Language was not merely a technique for expression, according to him, but at a much deeper psychosocio-cultural level giving meaning to and organizing experience. Since men act on the basis of how they think and perceive their world, language thus has shaped a large part of the individual's perception and human culture.

To demonstrate his thesis, Whorf (1956) compared two languages, English and Hopi, and has showed how they differ. According to him the user of English is allowed to pluralize not only phenomena, he can objectively see and feel men or houses or trees, but also phenomena he experiences only subjectively, like days. The English speaker easily applies cardinal numbers to both "two eggs" or "ten days" as though days could be gathered up like eggs. English grammar requires that the individual treat both kinds of experience as though each were objectively real. Hopi, however, never equates subjective experience, like the passage of time, with objective entities like men or houses. A Hopi speaker will



not say "he stayed ten days". Instead, he will indicate the passage of time as a flow, saying that such an individual "stayed until the eleventh day".

What Whorf (1956) has said of the Hopi, and his perception of time, is worthy of note: a Hopi, he has stated, has no general notion or intuition of time as a smooth flowing continuum in which everything in the Universe proceeds at an equal rate, out of a future, through a present, into the past; or in which, to reverse the picture, the observer is being carried in the stream of duration continuously away from a past and into a future".

To cite another example, Patai (1973) has dealt with the Arab perception of time in his book, The Arab Mind, and has shown that time in the Arab world was structured quite differently from what he has called the three tense system of the Standard Average European (SAE) languages.

In comparing Arabic with the European languages, Patai (1973) has asserted that Arabic suffers from 'indeterminateness', that is, the incapacity to present definite, ordered and sequential connotations of time, whereas European languages are better capable of structuring and quantifying time.

Patai (1973) has further attempted to demonstrate his point by showing that the Arabic language has a tense structure that is semantically vague and indeterminate,



with this vagueness being reflected in the character of the society. The tyranny of time which prevails in the West, as he has pointed out, with timetables, work schedules, advance planning, etc., cannot be easily accommodated in the Arabic language. As a result, the Arab has a lesser concern for time than the European or Euro-American, and the importance of ordering his life according to time schedules is of lesser urgency to him than it is to a speaker of an SAE language.

Hall (1959), who has been involved with the selection and training of Americans for the U.S. Aid program, was convinced that much of the difficulty experienced by Americans was due to a lack of understanding of cross-cultural communication. Hall has particularly mentioned the difficulty which Americans have had with Arabs in the Middle East.

He has cited this example of an American agriculturalist who went to Egypt to teach modern agricultural methods to the Egyptian farmers. The agriculturalist, at one point in his work, asked the local farmer how much he expected his field to yield that year. The farmer responded by becoming very angry. As the American probed for the reason behind the farmer's anger, he learned that the Arabs regarded anyone who tried to look into the future as slightly insane. When the American asked the Egyptian farmer about his future yield, the Egyptian was insulted



because he thought the American considered him crazy. The future, from the Arab's view, was known only to God, and as such it was presumptuous of him to speak of it.

Language, therefore, has to be taken as a serious carrier of time perceptions within cultures. Patai (1973) recognized this, but has significantly gone beyond this recognition to suggest that time, Western linear, quantitative time, must exist within the society as a precondition for modernization to take place. Thus, in the case of the Arabs, in view of their in concern with time, it was not difficult to discover the reason for their behaviour because the concept of punctuality does not exist in traditional Arab culture. This one simple fact, as Patai (1973) realized, made it impossible to introduce rigorous time schedules to such a society, a condition which must exist, and is necessary for the modernizing process.

Fanon (1968) has taken a more psycho-sociological approach to language and has related it to identity, to a people's beingness. He has stated that the colonized traditional peoples, in many instances, were forced to abandon their language for that of the colonizer's. Through this act traditional peoples were systematically deprived of their cultural originality and alienated from their culture and traditions. Fanon (1968) has quite rightly analyzed the colonizing process because culture, language and identity





are such a cohesive unit that the individual or people who are separated from their language, or forced to abandon it for another, put in jeopardy their culture and their whole historical past.

As Fanon (1968) saw it, colonialism's intent was to do exactly that; in not recognizing the language of the traditional people, the colonizer was implicitly denying that such a people had a culture, a civilization or a long historical past, the very essence through which a people's sense of time dimensions are derived and their continuity established.

The effacement of the past of traditional peoples was one of the objectives of colonialist policy. It permitted the colonizer the opportunity to shape and mould the minds of the people they governed according to the colonizer's wishes and desires.

There is an important message here which should be clearly understood. It is this: that the colonialists and their policies used culture, used language, to deny the continuity which a people would consciously have of themselves. For in the denial of the language, the colonialist was also denying the autonomous past, present and future of a people. They were denying a people a sense of their continuity as autonomous and independent. Development under these conditions could not be genuinely in the interest of traditional peoples because culture as the guiding force of



continuity and of authentic development was denied.

Samora Machel, President of the Republic of Mozambique, expressed just these views on the 25th of June, 1975, during the Independence Day celebrations of Mozambique's freedom from colonialism. He said: "it was in order to keep our people subjected to its domination that colonialism tried to destroy our personality, sow division and create a slave mentality towards the foreigner. Assimilation ... was in fact mental assimilation in its purest form, a deliberate process of negating all the culture, history and tradition of our people. A man thus spiritually destroyed became a living corpse, a docile receptacle for the colonizer's way of thinking, acting and living".

The colonizer showed no concern or respect for the culture or way of life of the indigenous people. Vilakazi (1977) has remarked that throughout Africa the educational systems introduced by the ex-colonial rulers had no relation whatsoever to traditional norms and ethical standards; and never connected or attempted to establish a link with national or local culture and tradition.

The objective of colonialism was to create a system which promoted a negation of the most authentic representations of the indigenous people's way of being - their history, their culture and their language. The history they were permitted to have under colonialism was that which



related to the arrival of the colonizer, and to the latter's 'civilizing' presence. The original culture was viewed by the colonizer as expressing a world-view which he considered 'barbaric'.

### Post-Colonial Development and Change

Many traditional peoples are today engaged in analyzing their colonialist past as they seek to create new societies and develop their resources to improve the standard of living of their peoples. The Africans, the ones most brutalized by the system of colonialism, are perhaps the most challenged to understand the effects of colonialism on its people. The independence which they accepted so joyously has proved to be a rather illusory and disappointing experience for many, and the reasons for this are obvious. Many of the young nations adopted the theories coming from the Western nations. They adopted the theories and methodologies based on an alien reality, and failed to develop their own theories based on their own historical experience and present-day reality.

Caplan (1973), in his review of Walter Rodney's book How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, remarked that the new African leaders failed to grasp the real nature of Africa's underdevelopment. Their strategy for development, based on the modernizing theories of the West, was to invite large



scale private investment, adopt a policy which would make their countries more attractive and profitable to Western investors, or seek substantial loans from abroad to generate greater working capital while disregarding the mounting debt and dependence which accrued to the nation.

If the West needed African extractive exports the Africans concentrated on expanding that sector, regardless of the distorted nature of a monocultural economic base. According to Caplan (1973) they were to find that the result of this exercise in post-independence strategies merely reinforced the very causes of underdevelopment, and perpetuated the situation which had existed under colonialism. 'Neo-colonialism' is the word used to describe this stage of underdevelopment, since the structures of oppression and domination have not changed but merely become indigenized.

Neo-colonialism has specific aims, one of which is to retain the same economic relationship between the ex-colonial developed countries and the developing countries. In the plans of neo-colonialism, the developing countries are to remain producers of raw materials, providing minerals, industrial crops, and foodstuffs for Western industry and commerce, while acting as markets for Western manufactured goods. This pattern of economic relationship served to protect the interests of the developed countries by keeping the underdeveloped countries economically weak and dependent on the developed countries. Thus in Woddis' (1967) opinion





there was and is a deliberate attempt to keep these territories as primary producing hinterlands of the metropolitan countries through Western investments, loans, trading policies and 'aid'.

Baran (1962) has explained that in all areas of Western penetration the Third World came out worse off in the unequal trading exchange which occurred between underdeveloped and developed countries. Commercial agriculture, to a considerable extent, displaced traditional subsistence farming; the traditional indigenous craftsman and artisan were displaced by the manufactured commodities which invaded the markets of these Third World countries. Whatever market for manufactured goods emerged in the colonial and dependent countries, became a part, not of the internal market of the traditional society, but in reality an appendage of the internal market of the Western capitalistic system. The Third World, and especially the Black world, which was integrated organically with Western capitalism, suffered particularly in the relationship which existed and continues to exist between the West and the Third World up to the present.

Some African leaders, Nyerere, Cabral, Nkrumah, have attempted to analyze this relationship between underdeveloped and developed countries while in the process of formulating new national ideologies for their people.

As Mogado (1974) has suggested, Cabral saw in the core of



his analysis a causal connection between the penetration by the West into the markets of the traditional societies and the hampering of their development. The disruption of the indigenous culture and the resulting cultural alienation Cabral also attributed to the colonial class structure instituted by the colonizer.

Culture or tradition plays a significant role in shaping the ideology which gives direction to the future, and the development path which a society chooses to follow. For Cabral, the concepts of cultural oppression, colonialism and liberation were linked. Mogado (1974) has stated that Cabral saw the mobilization and the organization of armed struggle against colonialist rule as a possibility only in societies which have preserved their traditional culture. Cabral's theory, therefore, of revolution or of change processes is rooted in the cultural resistance of the people. Cabral returns to the past, the traditional past, of his people to initiate the process of resistance, liberation and change (Mogado, 1974).

Laroui (1976) has accepted Marxist socialism as the most complete expression of the evolution of society in modern times. Cabral, in comparison, cannot be as easily convinced. Mogado (1974) has stated that Cabral was not as easily prepared to accept the exclusive Marxist interpretation of social reality based on class, because the existence of classes (in the orthodox sense) was not a



universal historical phenomenon. The simple fact that most African societies did not have and still do not have the class structures as existed in Europe in the nineteenth century with the coming of industrialization, has led Cabral to reject the notion of the revolutionary significance of a bourgeoisie-proletariat conflict. National liberation, for Cabral, was the organized political expression of the culture of the people who were undertaking the struggle. It was not, in its origin at least, the expression of any Marxist or socialist ideological aspiration of the people. The objective of the struggle for national liberation was, above all, an attempt by the people to return to their own culture and their traditional identity.

Cabral, according to Mogado, accepted the fact that traditional societies would change, but such change would occur in the process of liberation, and in the rebuilding of a national society. Change would occur concomitantly with the process of liberation. Changes in traditional institutions and values would emerge during this process to meet the exigencies of present conditions, but at all times the people's concept of self and of identity would remain unquestioned. Cabral's unique approach to change is his recognition of the cultural dimension as the originating and sustaining component in the process of change itself. Culture serves as the link between the past, the present and the future.



In Tanzania, Nyerere's approach is not remarkably different from that of Cabral's, despite the fact that one society, Guinea Bissau, is emerging out of a revolutionary situation and the other is not. Nyerere with his concept of 'ujamaa' is also concerned about linking the past with the present to achieve a future in harmony with the traditions of his people.

The word "ujamaa", when translated literally from the Swahili, means "familyhood". It describes the traditional African extended family and the relationship of love, respect, and interdependence which bound the social unit together. Ujamaa has become the cornerstone and the building block of the development future of Tanzania. It is the popular concept and the basis for a dynamic ideology in Tanzania's development effort. The word came to the forefront of national consciousness in Nyere's 1962 essay "Ujamaa: The basis of African Socialism" (Nyerere, 1966).

In this essay Nyerere declared that Tanzania had chosen a socialist path to development, but with a socialism deeply rooted in the social values of traditional Africa. He noted that in the African past social interaction was based on the spirit of the extended family, a setting in which the individual was organically linked to the community, worked for the community, and in turn expected the community to reciprocate by taking care of the individual in time of need. The community did not allow exploitation: laziness,





parasitism, and conflicts between the individual and society were not conditions for its existence (Kariuki, 1973/74).

Tanzania, like almost any ex-colonial country, was afflicted by poverty, disease, ignorance, oppression and exploitation, and the ideology expressed by Ujamaa was intended to create an alternative to the present realities of Tanzanian society. In 1967 a deliberate effort was made to implement the concept of Ujamaa with the issuing of the Arusha Declaration. This document, unlike "Ujamaa: The Basis of African Socialism", was not the statement of one man's (Nyerere) beliefs and wishes. The Arusha Declaration was a proclamation by the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) to build an ujamaa society. The declaration was a statement of intent to build socialism in Tanzania. It outlined the ideological and practical basis of this new direction.

The declaration aimed at broadly institutionalizing socialism in Tanzania with a view to promoting self-reliance, rural development and good leadership. Communalism was seen as a way of life and a value system to be reinstituted. Ujamaa was intended to stop the erosion of the traditional values which had continued under the pressure of African involvement in capitalism. Cash-crop farming, in particular, had tended to erode the old traditions of living together, working together and sharing the proceeds of labour equitably.



Instead of the old ujamaa patterns, a growing gap was developing between those who owned and hired labour, and the landless who offered their labour for hire.

Tanzanian ujamaa was/is therefore an attempt to keep the old values but also an attempt to express the need to give direction to change within the nation. Going back to the past is not an attempt to resurrect some lost golden age, but to reestablish the identity and cultural independence of its people. In this fashion both Cabral and Nyerere have chosen a future in harmony with their past. They have chosen cultural forms expressive of a unity of personal life with nature and history - their history.

Tanzania, through its ujamaa communities, is seeking to create a self-reliant, socialist, democratic society in which people share their work and its rewards, and relate to each other on the basis of equality of human dignity. To use Nyerere's (1973) own words, "we are not just trying to go backwards into the traditional past; we are trying to retain the traditional values of human equality and dignity while taking advantage of modern knowledge about the advantages of scale and improved tools".

Nyerere is concerned about establishing 'equality of economic freedom', a term which is completely different from its accepted meaning in capitalist-oriented societies. Economic freedom for Nyerere is a state or condition which establishes an economic base from which every individual



can feel equal. In contrast, economic freedom in capitalist terms implies basically the freedom to exploit - it is the right of the individual to exploit the labour and resources of others for himself. The ujamaa view is different; no individual is allowed to exploit for himself alone, or allowed to exploit, period. The awareness demanded of ujamaa ideology makes of work and of achievement a contribution towards a collective and shared ambition. The object is to contribute individually towards a society whose collective wealth is accessible equally to all. Ujamaa, therefore, is the intent to build a society of free people equal in every sense - politically, socially, and economically.

At a higher level, though, the ujamaa concept directly addressed itself to the dimensionality of time within its society; and it has done so in three important areas of the underdevelopment/development continuum. One, it has established or reestablished the connecting link with the traditional pre-colonial past, in which the principle of "ujamaa" existed in African communities. Two, it has reassessed its colonial past, in which past the ujamaa principle was destroyed and replaced by capitalism and exploitation, and the attendant loss of dignity and pride by the African in himself. Three, the principle, in its present form, in which a rediscovering of the traditional past is an important element, but also the recognition of



the need to adapt modern knowledge and skills to the conditions of traditional social organization.

Tanzanian leadership has consciously sought to establish the spiritual continuity, the traditional psyche of its people, through its ideology of ujamaa. Reveyemann (1973) has recognized the importance of Nyerere's concern with the 'national ethic' because such an ideology was designed to give the individual a unified and conscious 'weltanschauung'. Reveyemana (1973) has stated that it was necessary for the leadership to outline the basic principles on which to base future action, as they did not adhere to already existing leanings such as Marxism-Leninism. Reveyemann (1973) has further stated that although a world-view may give to an individual a certain outlook, it does not indicate to him how he should act. For the latter there was a need to articulate a 'practical ideology', a set of ideas that would enable an individual to transform the 'weltanschauung' into consistent action. This meant not merely applying universal truths to real problems, but also to unify universal theory and concrete practice.

Ujamaa is an experiment which is of significance to all Third World peoples because it addresses itself to the future without losing touch with its past, without severing the links with traditional values which have guided that past, and in which the sense of self and identity have





remained autonomous and independent. But more importantly, through an awareness of the sense of the traditional, it has created the possibility of linking man with nature. Nature as an intrinsic part of the development ethos cannot fail to challenge the mechanistic or technological dimensions of time endemic to techno-industrial societies of the West.

The ecological movement in the West is an expression of this very concern. It is an expression of the need for Western man to incorporate in his world-view a sense and a feeling for nature beyond the immediately usable or exploitable. The dominant world movements of capitalism and communism, both, stand equally condemned or convictable of the crime of viewing human purpose within the very narrow limits of the productive process. According to Gorz (1980) economic growth, which was suppose to ensure the affluence and well-being of everyone has led to a series of dead ends which were not solely economic in character; capitalist growth was in crisis not only because it was capitalist but also because it was encountering physical limits.

Gorz (1980) has also pointed out that the current crisis also possessed a number of new dimensions which Marxists have not foreseen. For the past hundred and fifty years, he has observed, industrial society has developed through accelerated wasting of reserves whose creation required tens of millions of years, and that until very recently all economists, whether classical or Marxist, have rejected



as irrelevant or 'reactionary' all questions concerning the longer-term future - that of the planet, that of the biosphere, that of civilizations.

However, Landheer (1974) has suggested that even if we disregarded the ecological argument and its implicit limits to growth, we would still be faced with the reality of a world of 'have' and 'have nots'. The universal qualities which science and technology were supposed to have, have not materialized in the relationship between the rich and the poor countries. The gap was increasing rather than diminishing, which made it difficult to maintain that 'development' (western style) was the solution.

The linear development model which assumes the uniformity of development as the ultimate phase of social evolution can no longer be tenable. According to Landheer (1974) we are faced today with the structural implications of development on which the world "failure" was writ large in regard to the human as well as the environmental factor.



## CHAPTER 4 - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: NEW BEGINNINGS

### Community Development and Time Dimensions

Since the nineteen fifties and sixties community development has been looked upon as an important and simple way to handle complex problems of change and the impact of change on communities.

Community development is therefore a relatively new science of development with a community orientation. Community development as a new discipline with universal applicability experienced its most dramatic growth after the Second World War, when political, social and economic forces converged in many parts of the world to create conditions that called for innovative policy and administrative approaches to solving social problems in socio-economic development and in meeting new needs (Campfens, 1977).

In 1955 the United Nations accepted the following definition of community development:

The term community development has come into international usage to connote the processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

This complex process is then made up of two essential elements: the participation by the people themselves in efforts to improve their levels of living with as



much reliance as possible on their own initiative, and the provision of technical and other services in ways which encourage initiative, self-help and mutual help and make these more effective. It is expressed in programs designed to achieve a wide variety of specific improvements (United Nations, 1971).

The objective of community development is development. However, the word 'community' qualified the process through which development would take place, for 'community' implied participation on the part of individuals for whom development was planned, and participation implied a process-orientation to change.

Community development is sensitive to such questions of "how to develop?" "How to implement change in this or that community or society?" Community development attempts to ask these questions when once a community or society decides to embark on a development process. Community development is a qualitative approach to development. In its approach to development it sees the 'process' as being of equal importance as the objective to which the process leads. Also, because of the nature of the process, because participation is such a significant part of the philosophy of community development, we are not and cannot be dealing with either a static or imitative conceptualization of 'development'. Participation implies not merely the utilization of the physical energy of the bodies which make up the community. To the researcher it means much more than that - it means true autonomy of the community to guide its change processes - it means that members of the community contribute





their ideas just as they would their physical energies in accomplishing agreed upon goals.

The 'process' aspect of community development is relevant to this research because the 'process' implies time. Since the 'process' is qualitative, since the process recognizes the necessity for participation on the part of the traditional society or people, then it follows that community development is indeed an approach to change which has to deal with dimensions of time other than in Western terms, and that it should express a sensitivity to these dimensions if the autonomy and dignity of a people are to be respected and their culture maintained.

The previous chapters in this research dealt extensively with culture. They dealt with time in the historical sense, that is, the way a people perceive the continuity of their existence through time. But it was also mentioned that in most traditional societies existence/continuity had a purpose; traditional man has a cosmology which guides and permeates his being at all levels of his existence. His dimensions of time were and are qualitatively different from the present world view, that world-view which is struggling so mightily to become the dominant view of the world, while at the same time belittling those of other cultures.

Time dimensions or time horizons as Grant (1969) has referred to them "are the absolute pre-suppositions within



which individuals, and indeed whole civilizations do their living". Bois (1972) has expressed a deep concern for us to become more aware of time as a dimension, as an essential characteristic of our lived reality, because once this awareness has become habitual, we then see the world and ourselves as on-going processes, each process having its own rate of acceleration or deceleration, its own rhythm, its own time dimension.

Bois (1972) has further acknowledged that it was relatively easy to sense the time dimension of processes that are immediately observable to ourselves, like watching the clouds move across the sky or the stream down the mountain, but that we experience greater difficulty in 'time-dimensionalizing' things that change very slowly, such as things that grow - shrubs, trees, etc.

Bois' comments lead us to ask two questions which are of importance to community development: first question; what is the time dimension of man, of humankind? Second question; what is the time dimension which infuses Western man?

Before we tackle these questions the reader should study briefly the diagram in Fig. 1. The diagram is representational of the process which this writer is trying to describe here. If you notice, community development is placed right in the middle of two forces. The first force



is that emanating from the industrial, developed, modern societies of the world. Its movement is towards the limitations being placed upon it by ecological and environmental limits as well as resource limits.

The second force pertains to the poor, underdeveloped traditional societies of the world; its movement is towards more technological development. Community development has aligned itself with both movements. In the case of the developed societies, community development is often called upon to challenge the development plans and programs of industry and big business. It is seen as the advocate for the 'little' man in a highly organized and bureaucratized society where the corporate will is all-powerful.

In the traditional societies, community development is an indivisible part of government. It is involved with projects which are designed to meet broad societal needs, and its meaning and importance stem from the national will to achieve goals which require the use of new technology.

If we look at the top of the diagram, we notice the key words are 'industrial' and 'technological'. What imbues industrial society is 'technique' in the sense in which Jacques Ellul uses the term. It is a specific mode of thinking which Vandenburg (1981) in his introduction to Ellul's book Perspective on Our Age described thus: "In creating the concept of technique, Jacques Ellul has made an important contribution toward understanding our age. In



my opinion this concept may well become as central for understanding our times as the concept of capital became for the eighteenth century. Our world has emerged from what Ellul calls a technical intention, which is the preoccupation of our civilization with the one best way of doing things. It involves studying every human activity and utilizing the results to build some kind of model. By determining under which conditions the model functions optimally, one can proceed to restructure that activity to make it as efficient as possible".

At the bottom of the diagram the key words are 'tradition' and 'ecology'. Similarly, what imbues traditional society is an ecological or cosmological awareness. When we speak of ecology today we are striving for nothing less than a term which adequately describes the relationship which exists among all living things as a complete unit, on the planet earth. It is a recognition that life, all life - plant, animal and human - is sacred in the sense that it has a purpose in the cosmic scheme of things.

Community development embraces both these movements and is challenged by both. This is why we must return to the question of time dimensions. This is why we must consider the future as continuity and not as history. Because, as Grant (1969) has noted, what the historical sense has made plain was that these historical time horizons were not what they claimed to be; they were not true statements about





actuality. They were man-made perspectives by which the charismatic imposed their will to power. The historical sense has taught us that its time horizons are not discoveries about the nature of things, but rather were the expression of value which modern man's tortured instincts have willed to create.

Community development is therefore centrally placed in the diagram between the two world views - the technological or modern view of the world, and the cosmological or traditional view of the world. We have previously examined this cosmological world view in Chapter 2 but we have not, in any depth, done so with the technological, except to show how the perceptions of modern men have been radically transformed by the sciences of the eighteenth century.

Science and technology are closely related. Indeed, it could be argued that technique is 'par excellence' the method of science. Ellul's definition of technique as a particular phenomenon of modern Western man is important to the field of community development, because in traditional societies community development identifies so closely with the use of technology as the medium of change. Technology is seen as the basis for implementing change, development and modernization. Yet, as Ellul (1981) has argued, we are in fact dealing with a total all-inclusive phenomenon when we deal with technique. The technological phenomenon, he has suggested, was not a product exclusively of the Industrial



Revolution. To the contrary, the Industrial Revolution was merely an aspect of a technological revolution already in existence. Ellul (1981) has remarked that what has permitted him to make such an observation was the fact that the state in Western society appeared at the same time as the Industrial Revolution was developing. The modern state, with all its structures, could be observed emerging, with new administrative forms, and a trend toward administrative efficiency and rationality. The same tendency could also be noted in the field of law. All of this has tended to confirm his view that technique was a total process.

The technological phenomenon as experienced by countries of the West had but one objective and that was efficiency. Technique, as a particular mode of thought affecting Western man, is the element which most characterises modern society. Technique is an all-inclusive view, much the same as the cosmological is an all-inclusive view determining human behaviour. Technique as a method characterizes the phenomena of all modern industrial states - capitalist as well as communist.

Modern technique, when viewed in relationship to the past use of technology before the modern era, and on the basis of scale, proves to have fundamentally changed the nature of modern society. The difference between technologies of the past and that emerging out of the eighteenth century was what Ellul (1981) has referred to as the participation of



the rational in what was previously a practical matter. Ellul (1981) has noted that in the eighteenth century people began to think about the technologies; they compared them and tried to rationalize their application, and this completely changed the perspective. A technology was considered no longer merely a practice; it was no longer merely an operation. In the eighteenth century technology passed through a rational intervention, and it had a completely different object; its object was efficiency.

Garaudy (1976) in his book The Alternative Future saw the technological dilemma that confronted modern man as essentially rooted in a lack of purposiveness or meaning. As he has stated, "the sacred but tacit postulate of our societies of the desirability of everything that is technologically possible is deadly".

According to Garaudy (1976) the blind race for profit and growth for their own sake has similarly influenced technology and science to operate for their own sake as well. He has argued that this blind faith in the criteria of efficiency of the business world was an inappropriate guide for society as a whole. If the business corporation has defined itself in terms of a technical end, he has stated, the overall society cannot thus define itself without creating a society of production and consumption for its own sake - a society with no human purposes. He has taken issue with the attitude that has identified corporate goals with societal



goals, because in his view societal problems cannot be solved by the same methods used by the management of a company or corporation.

A corporation's main function, he has stated, has been to sell a product. If nations were to adopt a similar approach to their people, this would be inhuman because people could not be considered as a product. In fact, human beings were the very opposite of being a product.

Yet, as Garaudy (1976) has significantly pointed out, scientific and technological research, as the primary precondition for acquiring wealth and power today, has become an end itself, with little thought of its effect on man's future. Development, according to him, was not the development of man but simply scientific and technological development for its own sake. Man in the process was simply one of its instruments, not its end.

The technological imperative of modern society, in Garaudy's analysis, seems incapable of grasping a future, or time dimensions in which man's future is given adequate consideration, or can be safe-guarded or protected. Garaudy's conclusion takes a dim view of modern man's view of himself and the future because modern man's view of the future as a technological future brings into question his own existence. It is a paradox, but nonetheless a reality, that modern man has become blind to time, and his very existence through time, because he himself has created a distorted view of time.





Grant (1969), in dealing with the concept of 'time as history', has also identified certain particular characteristics which have made modern man what he is today. Grant (1969) has suggested that modern man's view of the future, or vision of the future, has considered time as being inextricably linked to an animating vision, and that vision had as its objective the fulfilment of a specific condition, namely modern technical society.

Grant (1969) has further suggested that this vision of the future has made Western man more historical than the traditional civilizations still present today because of the way in which Western man perceived the future or time. Western civilization, as he observed, was dynamic, and this dynamism was related to an apprehension of temporality which concentrated on the future. Western man's vision of the future concentrated on or possessed two aspects: (a) it concentrated upon time as being essentially of the future, and (b) it saw time in terms of the dynamism of doing or mastery. These two aspects, according to Grant (1969), fed upon each other so that Western man increasingly came to define his existence in terms of an imaginable future constantly animated by a desire for mastery. This concentration on mastery eliminated from his mind any partaking in time other than as future.

Grant (1969) has observed that Western man achieved



more and more mastery through his works, and that the major thinkers of the day increasingly came to define time as history. In the process of the evolution of 'time as history' words such as 'progress' and 'history' were placed in the centre of the most comprehensive thought, and practical men were encouraged to justify their conquests as the crown of human activity. This process became even more intensified, according to Grant (1969), when the European ancestors of the Americans crossed the ocean and experienced the continent as pure potentiality (a tabula rasa). The attitudes which they brought with them became even more exclusively enfolded in the conception of time as progress and the exaltation of doing or mastery as a means to fulfilling the dream of progress.

This vision of the future, Grant (1969) concluded, has as its objective to establish the reign of technique throughout the planet, and perhaps even beyond.

Both Grant and Garaudy, in their assessment of the condition of Western society and modern man, have made important contributions to the study of time because they have established important connections between concepts which comprehensively make up the particular perception of time which is called Western. Time as history, history as progress, and the mastery or control of the future through technique, are brilliantly expressed in their analyses.



Whereas Grant (1969) saw time as conceived by Western man as almost exclusively within the control of man, Garaudy (1976) has taken the argument further; through technique or because of technique, Western man no longer controls time. Technology, because it is self-perpetuating, lacking in human purposiveness, has in itself made time and the future devoid of human purpose.

Community development is the ground on which the battle for these two competing world-views is being fought. At the very beginning of this chapter the writer said that community development was 'the science of development with a community orientation'. Both these words embody movements which are almost opposite in their directional flow: 'community', with its sense of organic wholeness, of intimacy and of a sense of time rooted in personal relationships and people; 'development', on the other hand, so closely associated with technology and an impersonal mass culture, possessing the sterility of a time that's always scarce.

Placed at the very centre of these civilizational movements, what can community development do? Community development must become more aware of both the micro and macro implications of development and must foster a perception which views both these dimensions as a unit, a whole. To do this adequately demands a vision of time which incorporates a sensitivity for continuities and an appreciation for 'community' as ecological units. That is, units which



recognize their existence as part of a system on which they depend, but to which they also contribute.

#### Time Dimensions and a New Age

Today there is a growing realization, which is planetary in its scope, that things cannot continue the way they are, that the present system will fall apart unless mankind can act differently than he has in the past. This feeling is not only true of the environment, but is also true at the political level as well. The conception of development as moving in the direction of a replica of Western advanced industrial societies is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain because of the limits to the natural resources and a questioning of the supportive capacity of the environment. There is also the increasingly pressing problem of life within the advanced industrial societies themselves, where consciousness of the adverse effects of science and technology has become more widespread. The existing 'order' is also coming apart since it has failed to meet the needs of the majority of peoples and reserved its benefits for a privileged minority.

There is a need to restructure another development and to redefine the content and direction of development. Such development should be holistic, encompassing the natural environment, social relations, education, production,





consumption and well-being. Since development should be indigenous, there is a recognition of the specificity of cultural or national situations which should be respected.

The Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, held in New York, September 1st to 10th, 1975, saw development as:

Development of every man and woman of the whole man and woman - and not just the growth of things - which are merely means. Development geared to the satisfaction of needs beginning with the basic needs of the poor who constitute the world's majority; at the same time, development to ensure the humanization of man by the satisfaction of his needs for expression, creativity, conviviality, and for deciding his own destiny (United Nations, 1975).

Community development, of all the development models, most closely approaches the new development as proposed by the United Nations. Community development is unique in comparison with other development models that have been suggested for improving the lives of people. Community development considers the reality of the human element as one of the most, if not the most, important factor in development. In the literature on development this aspect has long been neglected, or ill understood. As Vilakazi (1977) has pointed out, the socio-human aspect has been regarded as a derivative of the economic aspect of development within the equation development-growth.

The underdeveloped Third World countries are just beginning to recognize the need to move in another direction, towards what is called 'appropriate technology', technology



that is not energy intensive, nor capital intensive, and has less of a capacity to disrupt traditional or decentralized ways of life.

Dator (1976), in an address given at Lambton College in Ontario in 1976, noted a significant difference at the Habitat Conference of 1974 between the developed and the underdeveloped nations. The questions which most of the nations of the Third World were asking, he said, related to the wisdom of approaching their development on the basis of the Western model. To them it seemed ill-advised to move into an area of energy or transportation or housing with technologies developed in the West, especially when these industrialized countries were finding that those technologies would not continue into their immediate future.

There are two differing views of the future emerging, according to Dator (1976) from these two regional groupings of nations - the Western industrialized nations, and the underdeveloped Third World nations. The industrialized nations saw their future development as an extension of their industrial technology. The Third World nations, on the other hand, in adopting the philosophy of appropriate technology, were projecting a future based on an era before that of the industrial period.

There is a changing attitude towards the future on both the part of the West and the Third World. "It is less and less that the Third World is looking to the industrialized



world for their future - that's the message of appropriate technology. They are trying to say that they do not want to imitate the West any more ... a change of mood is occurring in which they are now looking to their own past for some sort of cultural revitalization ... A looking for a new way, a new future, a new definition of what it means to be man, human, that is not necessarily found in the West" (Dator, 1976).

The Third World is not exclusive in its disillusionment with development as it has occurred in the Western world. This disillusionment can be found in the West itself. The approach of the New Alchemy Institute, one of the more radical alternative energy groups in the Western World, located in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and Prince Edward Island, in the Maritime Provinces of Canada, demonstrates also a philosophy of a new development, one may say even of a New Age. They combine in their projects both a sense of the cosmological and an awareness of the technological. The New Alchemists, who are mainly botanists and marine biologists, avoid manipulative technology. Instead they have tried to integrate motions and processes suggested and maintained by natural forces - water, tides, heat, sun, gravity, digestion, decomposition. They have integrated science with nature. According to Grossinger (1979), "the physics is the falling of the stream; the dynamics is the radiant energy coming in;



the biophysics is the relationship between wind and rates of transpiration; the biology is the food resources and their relation to the overall ecology; the sociology is the people and their commitments and responsibilities; the sacred is the relationship of everything to everything else within that".

Grossinger (1979), whose article the writer has just referred to, saw in the major ecological disruption of the Earth by technology, questions which have not been raised previously by Western man, and has wondered whether there could be a new meaning to science. His questions are so pertinent and so identical to those of traditional cultures possessing that 'ancient mythical view' of the world that he needs to be quoted: "Is there not now a new meaning to science in harmony with spirits, science in harmony with the gods? Is it possible that all experimentation that does not have an "inner meaning and does not require the personal development of the scientist leads to upheaval and cosmic reprisals?"

This writer feels that time dimensions are conceptual tools which we need to develop to assist in restructuring 'another development', a post-modern development strategy. If we are to restructure and redefine the content and direction of that development we will need to have different perceptions of time dimensions, time dimensions which are different from that which dominate the consciousness of





Western man.



## Chapter 5 - CONCLUSION

The author of this study has specifically used the term 'time dimensions' to break out of the conception of time as being both under the control of man, and under the mastery of his efforts and techniques. The term is used in this study to convey meanings about the true nature of things (Grant, 1969) and to foster a perception of time in which man sees himself and the world around him as on-going processes (Bois, 1972). The term 'time dimensions' is therefore intended to convey an awareness of cycles or rhythms in which both man and nature play supportive roles mutually beneficial to the system they live in as a whole.

Cycles or rhythms should, therefore, be viewed as time lengths or time dimensions which are tied to real processes in the natural world. Cycles or rhythms have two functions. In the individual cycle, or time length, the cycle marks time with a specificity which is measurable. But in the cycle's recurrence or repetition the cycle establishes time dimensions which are akin to processes that are on-going, perennial. It establishes continuity which cannot truly be apprehended entirely by the measurable and the quantifiable.

The term 'time dimensions' as used within the context of this study is intended to capture the qualitative



## Time Dimensions

Techno-Industrial	Traditional
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Linear time</li> <li>2. Time considered as a commodity - 'time is money'.</li> <li>3. Socio-cultural behaviour is 'in' time - people are always pressured by time</li> <li>4. Time is patterned by bells, clocks, schedules</li> <li>5. Mechanical clock time is pervasive in all aspects of life.</li> <li>6. Efficiency as a component of time</li> <li>7. Life is organized according to mathematical time</li> <li>8. Work/leisure is organized in rigid time blocks</li> <li>9. Events are devoid of cosmic meaning</li> <li>10. Time is short-term - most governments operate on five-year plans</li> <li>11. Bureaucracy operates on efficient precise time</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discontinuous, non-linear time. Time marked by the event</li> <li>2. Time has no economic value</li> <li>3. Socio-cultural behaviour is not 'in' time - people are not pressured by time.</li> <li>4. Time patterned by events - market day, harvest, the rains</li> <li>5. Time is organic - the time of the milking of the goats, the time of the cock crowing.</li> <li>6. Time has no efficiency component</li> <li>7. Life is organized by the event</li> <li>8. Work/leisure is unorganized and remains fluid</li> <li>9. Events relate to a cosmic time</li> <li>10. Time is cyclical - which can include long periods</li> <li>11. Bureaucracy operates on a fluid time - manyana (tomorrow), inshallah (if God wills) etc.</li> </ol>
<div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> The Need for New Time Dimensions That can Incorporate </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ An Ecological Awareness of Development </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> ↓ A Structuring of Time to Achieve Development </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;"> Eco-Technology → Appropriate Technology ← </div> </div>	

Fig. 2 An Integrative Model of Time Dimensions



nature of time, time which is both immediate and extended. By 'immediate', the author refers to time that is linked to processes in both man and nature, time that has an observable pattern - a time length, or a rhythm or a cycle, or a time having a dimension that is known. Obvious ones are the day/night cycles, and the seasonal cycles of the year. By 'extended' the author wishes to convey the continuity which the cycle preserves. As the cycle repeats the specificity of its time again and again a qualitative change takes place, the specificity of time becomes subordinated to a time dimension in which the continuity of the cycle/process is seen as on-going. Its end is undetermined and unknown.

Time dimensions partake of both these aspects of time - time which is immediate and specific-to a cycle, and time which is extended and continuous-to cycles. Time dimensions also link the cycle itself with some natural process that is occurring or in process. The cycle is a product or a result of this natural process.

It is through this perception of time that the author wishes to propose 'time dimensions' as a way to perceive and order time other than either a static repetition of the past (traditional society), or as a one-dimensional linear progression (techno-industrial society). Fig. 2 is a representational model of the author's view of





both traditional and modern societies.

The model also suggests an alternative view which needs to incorporate 'an ecological awareness of development', particularly on the part of the techno-industrial societies. It has already been suggested that natural cycles are important to a perception of time in which dimensions of time are not entirely abstract, mechanical and linear. In the opinion of the writer, it is through these cycles or rhythms that nature, inclusive of man, maintains its many systems, and the macro system that is called the world system.

According to Allen (1980), we are only now beginning to understand the time dimensions, in both its specificities and its extenuations, of the environmental forces which impinge upon the rhythms of living things. In his opinion, we have not yet learned to live with the biosphere, that thin covering of the planet that contains and sustains life, and as such we have already damaged or destroyed certain natural areas through our technology.

He has cited forests as a prime example of natural areas that have been destroyed. The result of such destruction has influenced local and regional climates, and has lessened the availability of clean water. Allen (1980) has also attributed to technology the violation of these natural areas, and the cause of some of the en-



vironmental disasters that have occurred such as floods, droughts and outbreaks of pests. At least, it was his opinion that technology was partially to blame.

Allen (1980) has significantly made one important discovery: it was the realization that the components of the biosphere, including human communities, were interdependent. Such interdependence, as he has stated, included many human activities; these activities, although some may have had local effects, many others have had regional effects and still others have had global implications. According to Allen (1980), there was a definite link between ecological, social and economic behaviour, and that link needed to be much better understood than it is at present.

An earlier study by the Club of Rome called Limits to Growth (Meadows & Meadows, 1972) came to a similar conclusion. The stated objective of that study was to examine the global future of the planet in terms of five major trends of global concern - accelerating industrialization, rapid population growth, widespread poverty, depletion of nonrenewable resources, and a deteriorating environment.

The Club of Rome's study was the first such study to address these problems at a macro or global level, and it was the first such study to recognize that the trends



stated above were interconnected in many ways. In seeking to understand the causes behind these trends, their interrelationships and their implications, they found it necessary to design a model that could accommodate a time dimension of approximately a hundred years in the future. Meadows (1972) has further stated that to their knowledge, it was the only formal model in existence that was truly global in scope, and that possessed a time horizon longer than thirty years.

The Meadows' (1972) study, it should be noted, investigated the factors that made the techno-industrial society of the West work. The study was not intended to predict the future, but to prompt a better knowledge of what was happening presently, and what futures may possibly stem from what was being done and not being done in the present.

The study was different and important if for no other reason than this: it created a new field of research, a field in which the world was looked upon as a system. And the projected future of that system was time-dimensionalized in some form.

However, to add to two of the points raised above, namely the interdependence which exists between ecological, social and economic behaviour, and the recognition of the world as a system, consideration must here be given to a third. It is the scope of design which is open to Western



societies in terms of both the social and technological field. According to Vickers (1977) that scope for design has very definitely been exaggerated. He has also confirmed, what he has said was a new and growing realization in the field, that technology cannot function as an independent agent unto itself. According to him it was impossible to change State A into State B without affecting countless other states, states which may be of equal or greater importance to others or even to the individual change agent himself.

State B, as he has suggested, does not always come up to expectations, and sometimes the hidden costs incurred in achieving State B could be cause for greater and more insoluble problems than those which were solved by attaining it. In his view, the multiplication of atomic energy plants, with its ancillary production of plutonium and its growing mass of radioactive waste may prove his case to be true.

The three writers, Allen, Meadows and Vickers, have all recognized the need for an understanding of systemic limitations. They have all recognized that man is part of multiple systems, which in totality is called the macro system or the world or global system; and that these systems are linked, interconnected and interdependent, each to the other and to the whole. In other words, the





micro system or the local community cannot act or behave in isolation because its actions affect the macro system or the global community as well. Today the interdependence of different parts of the world are becoming more and more evident. It is with this view that the researcher of this study wishes to suggest the need for the greater extension of time dimensions within which it is possible to attach reality to the future course of these natural systems and natural areas of the environment.

It is with the realization that there are few, if any, concepts of other than a system based professionally on economic growth, that time dimensions are considered of particular importance in this study. In the author's opinion it is in being aware of the interconnectedness of the many systems - human, animal, plant - their existence in the past as well as their projected existence in the future, that a perception of time dimensions in systemic proportions begins to be a part of a new reality. And that new reality encompasses an essentially ecological view of development (see Fig. 2). This ecological image highlights both the web of relationships which exist and the interconnectedness of the systemic environment necessary to all human survival.

It is therefore necessary to maintain essential ecological processes because the maintenance of these



processes is vital to all societies regardless of their stage of development.

If it has not yet been realized, the author wishes to make quite clear, that in dealing with the problem of ecosystems it is necessary to disregard the usual thought patterns which sees things in exclusively either/or situations. For example, local as opposed to global, small as opposed to big, etc. In dealing with concepts that can truly apprehend the interconnectedness and the interrelationships of the present ecological and environmental problems it is vital for the individual to apprehend the continuity between big and small or between local and global. It is with these perceptions that the writer has used the term 'time dimensions' - it is to convey the connectedness between states. The term does not isolate one state from another, but rather establishes links between states.

An ecological view perceives time and dimensions of time in terms of the need to sustain and preserve the environment or the biosphere. It means that to sustain the environment or biosphere an image of the future has to be proposed, or at least be projected, to include the systemic or cyclic processes through which nature maintains its continuity. But ultimately the ecological view of development also contains, and equally seeks to sustain,



the human community in its continuity.

'Community' in this sense partakes of both the local and the global at one and the same time, and establishes relationships between the local and the global in a continuum of perception. An ecological view of community thus becomes an intrinsic component of the concept of time dimensions because it more specifically highlights the processes through which continuity is maintained. When one asks the question: "how can the local/global community sustain itself over time"? the question posed involves a perception of time which not only relates the socio-cultural past and the future to the present as meaningful dimensions of time, but includes also an awareness of ecological processes that maintains and sustains the existence of the local/global community.

On a socio-cultural level, the researcher thinks a similar comparison can be made between an ecological view which recognizes processes and their interrelationships and tradition which serves as the vehicle for maintaining the pattern or processes through which a people interact with their environment and each other. Tradition, in a way, parallels the ecological view which more aptly applies to the systemic processes occurring in the natural environment - the systemic processes of animals, plants and micro-organisms. Tradition parallels the ecological



process on the human level, because it also establishes the relationships, the mores, the attitudes and the values through which a society maintains and sustains the continuity of its people.

Tradition, then, although encompassing a view which operates with an ecological awareness, a sacred canon as it were, that has preserved the biosphere until the coming of modern man is itself not adequate to meet the challenge of rising expectations occurring throughout the traditional or Third World societies today. At the First Global Conference on the Future held in Toronto in July, 1980, one of the speakers from India, Mr. Rashmi Mayur\* said that communities in India that have remained placid for seven thousand years were now asking for ideas, goods, and services that were common to the life style of the Western world.

It is therefore obvious that to meet these rising expectations traditional societies will have to structure time to meet goals of development and a way of life significantly different from their past. In Fig. 2 the model suggests the structuring of time as a particular conceptual change that must occur before development

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\*This statement is from the personal notes of the writer, based on the presentation Mr. Mayur made at the plenary session on Monday, July 21, 1980, at the First Global Conference on the Future. Tapes of this session are available from the Canadian Association of Futures Studies





goals can be achieved. In the author's opinion development cannot be merely an economic or political concept; there are fundamental processes of culture and change attached to development which must be understood for change to take place.

Alverson (1977) has given a good practical example of the significance of time to the development process based on his experience in Botswana. According to him the Tswana, as the people of Botswana are called, experienced time quite differently from the peoples of Western cultures. Time as duration, or as occasion in a process, was defined by the events. Even the "time for something to take place", as he observed, was not reckoned in terms of an autonomous continuum. Time was not reckoned by a set of external markers of duration but by the event itself.

Alverson (1977) has given the example of holding a party in Botswana to illustrate the Tswanas' notion of time. If the Tswana was about to have a party and the party was to begin at mid-day, the injunction 'mid-day' would simply be a guide to action for the invited guests. The occasion for beginning the party in question would relate to when the actions of the assembling people created the necessary and sufficient conditions for the party, meaning when they began to act in a manner called 'partying'. Setswana (the language of the Tswana) as



Alverson (1977) mentioned, has no convenient way of expressing the notion that the party was late, early, or on time. In Alverson's (1977) opinion, nothing could be late, because the event had its own time. His concluding remarks on time are of significant practical importance to the community development worker in the field:

Imagine how action predicated on such a view of time would distress volunteers\* who must organize Tswana labor. Most Tswana will acquiesce to requests for performance defined in terms of clock-time. But the acquiescence often does not entail understanding, especially of the importance of the time component of the performance. For example, if a volunteer requests that a Tswana come to see him tomorrow morning at nine to discuss the selection of animals for sale to the abbatoir, it could easily happen that the Tswana does not show up until the afternoon or the next day. In such an episode the Tswana is fulfilling the major part of his promise to discuss selection of animals for sale. When one discusses such a matter is not that pressing since the abbatoir works year-round, and it makes little difference to the Tswana, and none to the cattle, when the conveyance is executed. The volunteer, of course, becomes livid. He sees time as something one can lose, something which has definite costs associated with it. The volunteer may see the Tswana perception of time as an indication of indifference, lack of respect for one's word, or even laziness.

This same experience of a cultural gap in time perception has been experienced by many southern Canadians who have had to work with northern Indian communities. In Fig. 2 the author has attempted to bring out the contrasting cultural views between the 'techno-industrial' and the 'traditional' societies.

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\*Alverson is writing about American Peace Corps volunteers in Botswana



Understanding time and how time functions in traditional societies is therefore of importance to the community development practitioner. If we were to take a hypothetical example of an oil company which goes to Nigeria to drill for oil and intends to recruit its workers from the local population, the company will be faced with the immediate problem of how to get the workers it wants at one place at a specified time. If the people have no sense of clock time it will be futile to say to them "be here at ten o'clock". It seems much more plausible that the workers would respond to a statement such as "be here at the first crowing of the cock".

In any case, it will be an important and invaluable exercise to first determine the time skills which a client population has and the manner in which time is structured in that society so that it can be utilized to develop a program which can make these skills function towards achieving the goals of the project. The practitioner therefore may choose to expand on the dichotomies mentioned in Fig. 2 and plan a strategy to meet the contingencies of the particular situation.

There are many examples from the technologically developed societies, in the author's opinion, where it is unwise to use technology. An example is the use of coal as an energy generating resource. The effects of such use



are demonstrably hazardous to the ecosystems of lakes and rivers, especially when it is known that the life of these natural areas are limited to a few years if coal continues to be used. Very definitely the situation calls for a different technology, and a different perception of time. It is possible that economic benefits might be had in the short-term, but in the long-term the impact of acid rain on the environment could leave the ecosystem of North America ruined for many generations.

Let us consider another example. The farmers of Saskatchewan and of the prairies generally have been farming what was once virgin land for two to three generations. Since the Second World War they have used more and more chemicals to achieve greater yields from their farms. However, they are now discovering that salts, due to chemical usage, are taking over more and more land each year. This makes the land sterile and unfit to grow anything.

The knowledge of chemical use on the land requires a change in the nature of farming. It requires a change in the size of farms, since large farms tend to depend more heavily on chemicals. To maintain the health of the land, however, farms must be of a size where the use of chemicals can be minimized, if not eliminated altogether. If the land must be safeguarded from further deterioration, again there must be a choice as to short-





term economic benefits as opposed to the ruin of the land in the long term.

In 1976 a small group of farmers, as well as those interested in this particular agricultural problem, formed themselves into a movement which they called 'earthcare'. The objective of the group as stated in their publication Earthcare: Ecological Agriculture in Saskatchewan (1980) was:

1. "To consider farming and gardening practices that would result in food of high nutritional quality, to ensure maximum physical and mental health.
2. To ensure that the agricultural system was sustainable; that is, that good quality food could be produced throughout our lives and those of future generations, by adequately conserving the fertility of the soil.
3. To minimize the negative effect of agriculture on the environment in which we live".

The earthcare movement has since grown to include farmers in all prairie provinces. They have, particularly, come to realize that the present economic system in agriculture places a high value on the short-term, economically profitable enterprise, rather than on the long-term welfare of the land and of the future generations that must draw their sustenance from it (Earthcare, 1980).

'Time is money' is a popular saying to most North Americans. This saying tends to typify the relationship



of time to short-term economic benefits (money) at the expense of long-term life-enhancing and life-sustaining conditions. The short-term techno-industrial attitude to time is perhaps most sobering in its use and development of nuclear power and the implications which such development have for human life and existence in communities.

The reality of nuclear power development and its effects over time suggests time periods of a quarter-of-a-million years before wastes from such development can be considered safe. There is also no known fool-proof method of storing such wastes or dispensing of them safely. Yet short-term economic benefits (time is money) propel politicians to make decisions which are known to violate and may even annihilate the future of mankind.

In the examples cited there is very definitely a dissonance in perception of time dimensions in which the land, or the rivers and lakes, or even human communities are protected. Yet, as community development practitioners, we intercede in an ongoing process of planning and action to introduce ideas that could affect existing and future plans of people and organizations in the community (Alchin and Decharin, 1979). Time dimensions, therefore, are aspects of development which should be seriously considered by the community development practitioner and included



as a relevant criteria for assessing and implementing projects.

The community development practitioner must also become aware of the context of time in which change or development is taking place. In the techno-industrial societies, change is most often brought about by techno-industrial development and such development often operates on the basis of short-term economic gains. In other words, techno-industrial development often operates on time horizons which are inadequate to consider the ecological and environmental impact of development.

The model developed by the author (Fig. 2) suggests an alternative to both the techno-industrial and the traditional perceptions of time dimensions. It seems to the researcher that in each of these models there is need for some integration which could guide the community development practitioner who operates in either of these societies. The techno-industrial and traditional societies are parallel systems each with its own advantages to its particular culture. However, the narrowing of the world, and the ecological concern for the environment have created a need for an awareness of the time context with which each of these societies operates.

The model in Fig. 2 was developed by the author to integrate these two parallel systems and to draw attention



to the benefits which each system can have for the other if time dimensions, as one of the factors in this consideration, is not neglected.

In the previous chapters two examples of movements which characterized 'another development' were discussed. These movements are the Ujamaa movement of Tanzania and the New Alchemists of North America. The sociocultural context of both these movements are profoundly different. 'Ujamaa' is the development ideology of a poor Third World country, and the New Alchemists are a small group of researchers in Canada and the United States whose work has a symbolic value quite beyond the small number of people involved in its project.

Tanzanians have incorporated into their national view through Ujamaa a future that is linked to their traditional past, but it is also a future that considers technology has a role to play in their development. Through technology Tanzania hopes to improve the lives of its people, but the use of technology is not unqualified. Tanzania intends to use technology that is appropriate to the culture and traditions of its people.

It is the author's contention that tradition encapsulates time dimensions which discriminate as to the acceptance or rejection of factors that are likely to change the way a society exists. Nyerere (1974), for





example, has deliberately refused to expand the social and political organizations which he inherited from the colonialism of the past. His reason for this, as he has stated, was due to the inconsistency which existed between the colonial institutions of the previous era and the traditions of the Tanzanian people. To him the colonial institutions represented an individualistic philosophy which was contrary to both the traditions and the aspirations for human equality represented by Ujamaa.

As has already been stated, tradition contains the elements of continuity for a people. Tradition reflects the past but it also shapes the future. It encapsulates dimensions of time through which a people, a group or a community establishes its continuity. Tanzania, therefore, in seeking to integrate the two concepts of tradition and the appropriate use of technology in its development future, has embarked upon an experiment in 'another development' which is different from either the 'traditional' or 'techno-industrial' modes mentioned above.

The New Alchemy Institute, according to Grossinger (1979), was an alternative energy group dedicated to a life-style that would avoid manipulative technology. They were concerned about developing more humane and self-sufficient life-styles that involved interrelated



food producing systems and small scale technology, and they have stressed the need to maintain a development, inclusive of technological development, that was in harmony with nature.

In 1976 in Prince Edward Island, the Ark Project was launched. The Ark was conceived and executed by the New Alchemy Institute. Mike Todd, the founder of the New Alchemy Institute, in his 'Briefing Notes for the Ark Tour' (n.d.) has described how the Ark would function as a self-sufficient micro-farm home relying on natural systems. In his address to the Rotary Club of Montreal in June 1976, the Hon. Alexander Campbell, Premier of the Province of Prince Edward Island, mentioned that the Ark was an ecologically designed bioshelter which was self-sufficient in providing food, energy and shelter by using natural systems to sustain its inhabitants. He saw the Ark as an experiment which had the potential for investigating soft energy paths, and developing the possibilities of using diversified renewable energy sources, like wood, the sun and the wind, technology that would not be harmful to the environment.

The New Alchemist is possibly the most developed experiment in the techno-industrial societies of the world which has attempted to evolve development alternatives which included ecological time dimensions as part of its strategy. As McRobie (1981) has pointed out, their



research and development work has embraced aquaculture and intensive organic agriculture, solar energy, windmills and bio-shelters. "Their aim is to design and test human support-systems - food, energy, shelter - that are environmentally sound, low-cost, and capable of wide-spread use on a decentralized basis, appropriate for families and small groups".

In both the case of the Ujamaa movement and the New Alchemist Institute there is a concern for structuring and guiding development in which technology and ecology are integratively linked and supportive of each other. They both seek to develop and use appropriate technologies that could be made and used by families. Both these movements are also informed with a vision of self-reliance based on small groups or communities which is a definite community development philosophy. In this sense, community development embraces a philosophy of scale, human scale, and attempts to implement change to meet basic human requirements. It is concerned with what is essential to the needs of people, as opposed to 'development' which often encompasses grandiose schemes of unnecessary growth, and an irresponsibility to all but economic short-term rewards.

The author fully agrees with Wiener (1978) when he has suggested that we need to restore the unity of the man-nature system; that the past consideration we had of



nature as something external and inimical to man to be manipulated and conquered was indeed hubris, and such hubris can be avoided only by embedding the technosphere in the biosphere in such a fashion as would ensure the maintenance of tolerably steady states in both.

But to maintain the man-nature systems in harmony with each other it is necessary to attach their realities to time dimensions which can sustain both their continuities at both the local community level and the global level.





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